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**“Rockin’ all over the world”:  
The Assimilation of Rock Music in Five European  
Countries  
(a comparative study)**

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**PhD**

**Music Department  
Durham University**

**2014**

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## **“Rockin’ all over the world”: The Assimilation of Rock Music in Five European Countries**

### **Abstract**

This dissertation examines the historical process of assimilation of rock musical idioms in five European countries: Britain, France, Germany (East and West), Greece, and Italy in the period between 1955 and 1985. Taking a comparative approach, it is argued that the process of assimilation unfolds in a number of distinct stages that can be clearly identified in each of these five countries, albeit with differences due to the particularities of each country’s pre-existing popular music culture, political conditions, and media structure. I propose that there are four main stages that can be identified: (1) a period of reception when rock’n’roll was largely enjoyed and copied as a fad of foreign origin; (2) a period of more creative imitation where an imitative rock idiom arose within each country, partly in response to media efforts to institutionalize and domesticate it, and partly in response to the influence of the ‘British Invasion’; (3) a period of development characterized by a self-conscious blending of indigenous elements with rock idioms; and finally, (4) a point where the assimilation of rock music finally becomes more intuitive, rock idioms freely interacting with distinctive national/indigenous features to produce new hybrids.

By taking an overarching socio-cultural approach to popular music and its development which emphasizes both top-down (i.e., institutionalized) as well as bottom-up (e.g., underground) musical activities, this study examines the factors that led to the full assimilation of what was initially American rock’n’roll through tracing the changes that occurred in the popular music contexts of each of these five European countries during these four phases. It is argued that the full assimilation of rock idioms led to the creation of new hybrid musical languages that, despite the features they have in common, nevertheless also carry the particularities of their specific national contexts in which socio-political situations, nation-state policies, economic conditions, and the everyday activities of the people exist with and in relation to an ever-present, shared and, most importantly, imagined historical and cultural past.

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Finally, I would like to acknowledge AHRC for partially funding this research project.

# **Part I**

# Chapter 1

## Introduction

### Aims and Rationale

The main aim of this research is to examine the historical process of assimilation of rock musical idioms as carried through rock'n'roll and later, rock music, in five European countries: Britain, France, Germany (East and West), Greece, and Italy in the period between 1955 and 1985.

The historical context underlying this study, and which in itself is not its main focus, also provides the rationale for the selection of these countries. One aspect of this context lies in the immediate post-World War II years and the dominance, both informal and formal, of American<sup>1</sup> culture and the widespread influence of african-american<sup>2</sup> music in parallel with US aid programmes for countries in what became the American sphere of influence. The other aspect of this context is the recognition that since the mid-1950s there has been a gradual process of standardization of a vocabulary of musical idioms that was increasingly being used in large parts of the world, albeit taking, in response to the tensions between the global and the local, a different character in each country. Many scholars have touched upon the distinctively local character of these international idioms in each country, most of the time by focusing on reception theories.<sup>3</sup> However, there has been little discussion of the fact that these idioms, through their

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<sup>1</sup> The terms 'America' and 'American' will be used throughout the following text to refer to the United States, rather than to the American continent as a whole.

<sup>2</sup> Needless to say, the term african-american cannot be applied freely without a prior acknowledgement of the debates and problems that surround its usage. Nonetheless, due to the lack of space that renders a close reading of these problems and debates impossible here (for references concerning this debate see p.32), I would like to clarify at this point that the term is used in this dissertation to refer to a specific set of musical idioms that were considered inconsistent with what was *perceived* as European-derived music and were at the same time widely used in styles of music that were associated more with the music of the African-American people and that featured prominently in rock'n'roll. It is in this context that the term african-american musical idioms (although not unique to african-american music and although not unique to rock'n'roll but featuring as part of a continuum that includes jazz and blues) is used in this dissertation to describe music that carries characteristics such as syncopated rhythms, the twelve-bar blues format, mostly pentatonic melodic sequences, blue notes, rougher singing styles, call and response techniques, among others (see also pp.34-35, p.41)

<sup>3</sup> For a discussion of 'reception theory' see Brian Longhurst, 'Reception and consumption theory' in *The Continuum Encyclopedia of Popular Music of the World*, v.I: Media, Industry and Society, John Shepherd, David Horn, Dave Laing, Paul Oliver, Peter Wicke (eds.), (London: Continuum, 2005), pp.120-122

existence in any given country, have become finally assimilated, and are now used intuitively within a broader context of various popular music genres. One could see them becoming standard parts of the popular music vernaculars of these countries, and thus part of their musical cultural capital. Less attempts have been made to explain the *process* through which this assimilation takes place, and the factors that have played a crucial role in this process.

In order to understand the process of assimilation in this context, I argue that it can best be seen as unfolding in four stages that can be clearly identified in each of the five countries considered in this study, notwithstanding the differences that might arise due to the particularities of each: (1) a period of reception when rock'n'roll was enjoyed and merely copied as a fad of foreign origin; (2) a period of imitation where an imitative rock idiom arose in each country, both through efforts towards institutionalizing it and as a result of the influence of the 'British Invasion'; (3) a period of development characterized by the conscious blending of national and rock sounds; and finally (4) a period where the assimilation of rock music is achieved through what I call an 'intuitive' merging of rock idioms and national sounds. By employing a comparative approach I am more able to tease out the factors that play an important role in this process, and thereby come to an understanding of a process that should not, I suggest, regard any single individual factor (like, for instance, the audience, or the nation-state) as the sole responsible agent for the assimilation of any particular musical idiom.

The rationale for engaging with this kind of comparative study stems from a natural curiosity as to whether the act of composing or consuming songs that use idioms imported from a foreign culture and which are at the same time being used by people of different cultures can be seen as an 'authentic' creative process, and also whether it can be considered in terms of an 'authentic' expression of any given *national identity*.<sup>4</sup> My focus, in other words, is the emergence of new national rock sounds on the one hand, and the increasingly intuitive use of rock elements in the creation of songs of different styles on the other. I suggest that it is specifically the latter that indicates that rock elements have now become fully assimilated and have gained a legitimate place in the musical

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<sup>4</sup> The context in which the term 'authenticity' is used in this dissertation is discussed in Chapter 2.

vernaculars of the countries under consideration. An extension of this is the observation that these musical idioms have become standard parts of a range of national repertoires, or put otherwise, these musical idioms seem to have become parts of what Hatch and Millward call, albeit for different purposes, a ‘common stock’ of materials.<sup>5</sup> Indeed, it is in these terms that I treat rock musical idioms as these have been internationalized through rock’n’roll and, later, rock music, and have gone on to become the main elements for the formation of what Regev sees as ‘ethno-national cultural uniqueness’ in the sense of ‘*aesthetic cosmopolitanism*’.<sup>6</sup>

At the same time, by using the example of rock’n’roll (in acknowledgment of it as the first popular musical idiom to become ‘internationalized’ in the way I am suggesting here) I aim to identify a process that could also be applicable to musical idioms that have achieved similar internationalization in later years (like hip hop and dance music), although maybe in less straightforward ways. All in all, this dissertation aspires to tease out the factors that are of importance for the process of musical assimilation and present a dialogue between them without placing emphasis either on the institutionalization of music by the mainstream music industries, or on reception theory, or the political aspect of the music, since, as is to be seen, there is no single factor that can be identified as ultimately responsible for this process, but rather a combination of factors that eventually led to the assimilation of rock’n’roll musical idioms by the national popular musics of the countries under consideration here.

### **Problems to be addressed**

Needless to say, a study of this kind inevitably encounters problems that need to be addressed from the outset. These involve: notions of ‘national popular music’ and the ‘nation’; the idea of ‘assimilation’; the rationale for the choice of the countries discussed here; the historical context in which rock’n’roll appeared; and the problematic case of

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<sup>5</sup> David Hatch and Stephen Millward, *From Blues to Rock: An Analytical History of Pop Music*, (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1990), p.18; The term ‘common stock’ as used in Hatch and Millward is borrowed by Tony Russell and refers to the numerous songs and themes that were used by both black and white musicians from the period ‘before the gramophone’ was invented. I use the term here to indicate the ‘common stock’ of musical elements that have been used internationally in the popular musics of various countries after the influence of rock’n’roll.

<sup>6</sup> Motti Regev, ‘Ethno-national pop-rock music: aesthetic cosmopolitanism made from within’ in *Cultural Sociology*, 1/3 (2007), p.318

British popular music which, despite its status as a ‘receiver’ of rock idioms, quickly became an ‘exporter’ of rock music after the early assimilation of rock music by the British bands.

First, what is meant by the notion of *national popular music* itself? Although the term is going to be discussed in detail in its conceptual aspect in Chapter 2, it is worth identifying here what are considered to be the ‘national’ boundaries of popular music in this dissertation. Certainly, numerous musical activities constantly take place within a national context at the same time, but not only can they not be identified in their entirety, they cannot all be seen to contribute equally to the formation of ‘national popular music’ either. Indeed, my focus on the realm of the ‘national’ in regard to popular music means that I have had to be selective, given the total range of musical activities that might be seen to come under the concept of the ‘national’ like individual music consumption and niche musical tastes, amateur music making, grass roots musical activities, underground musical networks, and local music scenes, among others. Nonetheless, it needs to be pointed out that these kinds of musical practices are not being ignored altogether here. Rather, they are extensively dealt with in cases where they have developed to such an extent as to achieve national visibility and to effect directly or indirectly the development of the popular music of the countries in which they appeared. As is to be seen in the chapters that follow, this is something that happens often in relation to popular music idioms, and one way of interpreting it is through the prism of ‘cultural co-optation’, or ‘cultural appropriation’. More specifically, this applies in cases where grassroots musical idioms that manage to reach wider audiences eventually become incorporated within the mainstream music industries which, in their turn, neutralize the possible ‘revolutionary’ aspects of these musical idioms, or seek to exploit them commercially.

Nevertheless, the fact that my approach is not exclusively based on these grassroots musical idioms should not on the other hand suggest that it is based exclusively on readings of the mainstream, institutional culture of the countries under consideration here either, despite the fact that such a risk is in itself ever-present due to the nature of the perspective used. Indeed, the obvious top-down involvement of the nation-state and the central broadcasting systems in the formation of ‘national’ popular musics creates the risk of reducing the notion of ‘national popular music’ to that of

‘institutionalized music’. I have sought to avoid this risk by adopting an overarching approach to popular music and its development which emphasizes both top-down (i.e., institutionalized) as well as bottom-up (i.e., underground) musical activities. From my point of view, the ‘national’ in popular music is to be found in the space created between the actions of centralized, mainstream musical culture, and the alternative musical networks that develop through what I call the ‘underground’. I see this dialectic as being in its turn located within a socio-political context where nation-state policies, economic conditions, and the everyday activities of the people exist with and in relation to an ever-present, shared, and most importantly, *imagined* historical and cultural past.

This brings me to the second issue that needs to be addressed here. The word *imagined*, which is used with reference to Benedict Anderson’s famous description of ‘modern nations’ as *imagined communities*, is the key term here,<sup>7</sup> since my use of the term ‘national popular music’ is placed within the context of ‘modern nations’ as used by Anderson. Indeed, this dissertation deals with Britain, France, Germany, Greece, and Italy as entities in their modern political form, although I recognize that the history of each extends well beyond their modern form, to encompass pasts that are complex and histories that would require more space than is available here in order to be untangled. As my research is based on the post-WWII years, a close observation of the histories of these countries before their emergence in their modern form would be largely irrelevant. However, it should be pointed out that due to the focus on the national popular music in these countries as modern nation states, the notion of ‘national identity’ as it appears here is not one directly equivalent to the notion of ‘cultural identity’, although the two converge in many respects. It is a matter of fact that what are considered to be the ‘authentic’ and original traditions of these countries often date back to times prior to their emergence as modern nation-states, and are often shared with other countries as well. Such is the case, for example, with the elements that characterize German popular culture, which are by and large ones that are in many respects shared with other countries, like Austria. In any case, as has been stated earlier, what I am concerned with here are the developments of the national popular musics of these five European

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<sup>7</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, Revised Edition (London, New York: Verso, 1991)



countries after their reception of rock'n'roll. The recognition that such developments were subject to nation-state policies, relied largely on centralized national broadcasting networks, and worked within and against the social, economic, cultural, and political context that was particular to each country makes the focus on the 'national' in the sense of the modern nation state the main consideration here. Furthermore, this is also a reflection of my decision to focus less on ideas of 'local' or 'cultural' identities and to emphasize rather the transformation of 'national' musical identities during and through the process of *assimilation* of rock musical idioms from the mid-1950s onwards.

The notion of 'assimilation' also needs clarification here. I shall avoid conceptualizing the term as such, and will rather try to explain my view of assimilation by considering examples within an everyday context in order to clarify what I mean by the term, while in the process also contextualizing what I mean by the concept of 'authenticity'. To begin with, I shall refer to the situation regarding the popular music scenes of countries other than the USA and Britain in general, and, more particularly, the countries discussed in this dissertation. For instance, it is not surprising nowadays to hear songs of any popular music style that do not directly derive from what is considered to be the 'authentic cultural tradition' of a country but is instead one of which the musical characteristics exist in other countries as well, and consider this as a product of the indigenous popular music scene of the country in question. We find it natural to hear, for example, the songs of a Greek heavy metal band and regard these as being in some way representative of the 'authentic' Greek popular music scene. Similarly, a DJ in France who might present a set of techno music of exclusively French production would normally be considered to be playing 'authentic' products of the French national popular music scene. Another example of assimilation as used here is the case when elements from musical styles that have originated in a different country, such as rock, hip hop, and dance idioms, are incorporated into the creation of styles of songs that are considered characteristic of a specific country: in these cases, the intuitive blending of those 'foreign' idioms with the 'national' idioms in ways that seem natural create musical hybrids that are again considered to be 'authentic' productions of the country in which they appear. For example, a Greek song that could be classified as *laiko* (a commercial genre of Greek popular music) but which is presented with rock instrumentation and

makes use of rock guitar riffs is still consumed as *laiko* by its audience, and would hardly make anyone doubt its authenticity as a Greek song. It is important here to state that these examples of assimilation fall directly into Regev's accounts of 'ethno-national pop-rock' and 'aesthetic cosmopolitanism'. In his words:

Pop-rock music stands here as a major embodiment of the transformation that took place in the cultural uniqueness of many nations and ethnicities (henceforth called here ethno-national cultural uniqueness): from an emphasis and quest for purism and essentialism, to a conception of ethno-national uniqueness which I call *aesthetic cosmopolitanism*.<sup>8</sup>

As I will attempt to show in the course of this dissertation, all of the above examples deserve to be considered as authentic products of the national popular music scenes that gave rise to them. However, their claim to authenticity would not have been valid were it not for an earlier process of assimilation like the one I am suggesting here, and which does not differ substantially from the one Regev presents, but is one which is dealing with a different set of factors that contribute to the reach of assimilation.

All in all, the assimilation of a range of 'international' musical elements by countries worldwide has created a 'common stock' of musical elements that are now being used internationally. This is a fact that can hardly be contested, and to a large extent it underpins my main research question. I argue in this dissertation that this 'international' popular music vocabulary, which is often taken for granted nowadays, is the result of a process that is neither simple nor straightforward. This process involved musicians, audiences, the music business, the nation-state, the media, economic and technological developments, the contribution of the counterculture, and many other factors which will be addressed in the course of this dissertation. As mentioned above, I suggest that this process was initiated with the importation of rock'n'roll, and developed in four main phases: the period of reception of rock'n'roll; the period when it was imitated; the phase when rock idioms were developed through the incorporation of national musical idioms; and, finally, the phase when rock idioms became assimilated within the musical cultural capital of the countries under consideration and therefore

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<sup>8</sup> Regev (2007), p.318

became what I am here calling ‘authentic’ elements of the cultural expression of the countries in which they had now become integrated.

Undoubtedly, many scholars have addressed the ways in which popular music scenes (whether national or local) develop and become transformed following the influence of foreign musical idioms. As Prato puts it: ‘some observers hold that there are three broad stages of musical evolution: a) learning to understand another type, style, of music; b) peripheral repetition of that dominant music, and c) peripheral creation of original music that combines indigenous and “Other” musical elements’.<sup>9</sup> I argue here that there is an additional, fourth stage in this process, one which indicates that the idioms have finally become fully assimilated, and that this particularly manifests at the point when these idioms reach the stage when they are being used ‘intuitively’ and creatively in the popular music of each country. Put otherwise, it is at the moment when these musical idioms have become part of the cultural capital of the host country that a full assimilation can be said to have occurred. Regev takes a similar position, but he separates the process by taking a somewhat different approach. The four stages he suggests are: a) ‘pre-history’ (where in the local contexts there are imitations of the first type of rock’n’roll, followed by imitations of the beat-bands in the 1960s); b) ‘consecrated/mythical beginning’ (seen as the beginning of local versions of rock after the influence of the Beatles, Dylan, folk rock, psychedelic music, and progressive rock); c) ‘consolidation and dominance’ (where there is a merging of rock idioms with particular traditional national musics of the receiving countries, the manifestation of new-wave music in local contexts, and what he calls the ‘rockization of pop’); and d) ‘diversification, internationalization’ (this he attributes to the rise of other styles such as hip-hop, electronica, and metal, and the visibility of local bands in the international scene).<sup>10</sup> Although I take a position that shares certain features in common with that of Regev, my approach to the process of assimilation nevertheless differs in its emphasis on four distinctive but continuous phases ranging from simple reception and imitation, via a more complex process of mimesis and development, towards a full and creative internalization and assimilation. Since my main interest here is in the *factors* that played a significant role in the process of assimilation

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<sup>9</sup> Paolo Prato, ‘Selling Italy by the sound: cross-cultural interchanges through cover records’ in *Popular Music*, 26/3 (2007), p.449

<sup>10</sup> Regev (2007), p.327

much more than the fact of assimilation itself, I have separated the phases according to the internal changes that happened within the national contexts after the reception of rock'n'roll. From this perspective, what Regev sees as pre-history, I see as two distinct phases (reception, and imitation), and what he sees as the 'mythical beginning' I see as the conscious development of rock music through the incorporation of national musical elements. Finally, I consider his third phase (consolidation and dominance) to be my final destination, since it is in effect what I myself see as the point of assimilation (which appears to be Regev's position as well). As I am dealing particularly with the case of rock idioms, the process of assimilation that I am proposing ends at the point when they become part of the cultural capital of the countries under discussion here (which, in my estimation, has occurred in all these cases by around 1985). Moreover, my methodology differs fundamentally from Regev's comparative study between Argentina and Israel in that I am dealing with five countries that are in close geographical proximity and of similar socio-political situation during the years concerned. I suggest that this comparative study of the process of assimilation in five different countries sharing contexts of proximity makes the manifestation of differences and similarities easier to pinpoint.

This brings me to another important issue to be addressed here: the choice of countries to be used in this comparative study. The primary reasons for my choice of Britain, France, Germany, Greece and Italy were two-fold: first, the availability of and access to information; and second and most important, the historical, political, and cultural situation in the immediate post-WWII years. The first of these reasons can be easily and quickly accounted for. Ideally, the countries compared would carry both similarities and differences that would be easily identifiable. Additionally, they would allow for good access to information and existing academic studies in the field to enable me to undertake a three-year research project of this kind. Furthermore, my knowledge of European languages includes in particular English, Greek, French, and Italian. The second reason for my choice is more complex and requires a more detailed context.

Although after the war most European countries were left in ruins and were trying to rebuild themselves economically, socially and culturally, the two postwar superpowers, the USA and the USSR, were already engaged in the division of the

continent into new political spheres of influence and control. As Peter Calvocoressi writes in *World Politics since 1945*, neither of the superpowers and their collaborating countries could afford financially or emotionally to engage in another armed conflict. The positive outcome of this was that the European scene became then the world's most stable area and remained so for several decades to come. Calvocoressi draws our attention, for example, to the upheavals in Asia, the Middle East, and in Africa during the ensuing period of decolonization that contrasted so strongly with the European situation within the Cold War period that first crystalized in 1948.<sup>11</sup>

A detailed description of the processes that led to the division of power within Europe is beyond the scope of this study. It does, however, have some relevance for explaining my rationale for deciding which countries should provide the focus for a comparative study that seeks to account for the diversity of popular musics – and specifically rock musics – that emerged during this period in those parts of Europe under the American sphere of influence. According to Cavocoressi, the mid-century domination by the great powers, discussed by the British (Britain was the most powerful European state after the war, and the closest collaborator of the USA) and the Russians on how the responsibilities were to be divided, led in October 1944 to the decision that the control of western Europe by the west was to remain unchallenged, although Poland was not included in this since it was under Stalin's military control. The control of Greece was also given to the British without disagreement from the USSR, whereas the Russians had the control of Romania, Bulgaria, and Hungary. Austria and Germany on the other hand were to be governed collaboratively.<sup>12</sup> The affirmation of the non-collaborative possibility came with the refusal by the Russians to accept the American Marshall Plan (which was provided as economic help for every European nation) in 1947; this negative attitude confirmed the separate development of eastern and western Europe and also led to the division of Germany into two different states.<sup>13</sup>

The division of Europe after WWII was followed by the emergence of what Bohlman calls 'new nationalism', seen in the attempts of the European nations to rebuild

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<sup>11</sup> Peter Calvocoressi, *World Politics since 1945*, 9<sup>th</sup> edition (Essex: Pearson Education Ltd., 2009), pp.3-4

<sup>12</sup> Ibid, p.5

<sup>13</sup> Ibid, p.13

and redefine themselves in the immediate post-war years. As Bohlman suggests, music was often given a central role in the context of European ‘new nationalism’. He writes:

Rather than seizing the opportunity to herald the new nationalism as the milestone for a journey into a future untrammelled by the past, the governments and ideologues of nations in both East and West [...] plumbed the past, as if obsessed with the pressing need to reimagine and reconstruct national history [...]. Music, so thoroughly implicated in national history, proved to be one of the most effective means of tapping the past and remapping it on the present [...] music contributed substantially to the vocabularies and public culture required for the new era of the European nation that began in about 1950 and continued for the next four decades, a historical moment we have long since called the Cold War.<sup>14</sup>

One of the main devices that the European countries employed in their efforts for reconstruction was to highlight their important historical pasts, both by emphasizing their affinities with high culture, and by bringing their ‘national’ musical idioms to the fore. As is to be seen later, this was mainly a device of ‘protection’ against the catapult which the American influence (economic, cultural, and musical) turned out to be.

Indeed, in the aftermath of WWII the USA emerged as the culturally dominant country, and, in combination with the technological capability it acquired (the recent development of which allowed for the dissemination of its cultural products) as well as its economic sufficiency, became the most highly influential nation at this stage. The influence of American popular music is an integral part of this process, and this is what is looked at in this study. Britain, France, Germany, Greece, and Italy share the common denominator of being within the American sphere of influence in the immediate post-war years, and thus of being exposed to American cultural products, including rock’n’roll. The fact that each of these countries has a cultural and musical background that is both distinct, powerful, as well as specific, strengthens the possibility that during the reception and development of rock’n’roll in these countries the already existent musical cultures were affected in ways that could provide interesting insights particularly informative for a

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<sup>14</sup> Philip V. Bohlman, *The Music of European Nationalism: Cultural Identity and Modern History*, World Music Series (Santa Barbara, California: ABC-CLIO, 2004), p.70

comparative study like this. A few more words on each country will serve further to exemplify this.

As is to be expected, Britain, although the country in this sample with the least distinct popular music in relation to that of the USA (one needs only to consider all the exchanges between them, also evident in the fact that the melody of the ‘Star-Spangled Banner’ is based on a British popular song), could hardly be excluded from a study like this, since it was the nation that was not only the first to assimilate these musical idioms (and very quickly) but which then sent them back to their original context (the USA), and in the process created a new rock style, which transformed the notion of african-american music to anglo-american music. In addition, Britain and the USA not only shared a common language, but also shared, as Calvocoressi suggests, experiences and ideals.<sup>15</sup>

France, another European state that became powerful after the war, is an interesting case as well, in the sense that it had always been, and still remains, very protective of its own culture and strongly resistant to foreign cultural imports (and, as we are to see, especially American cultural imports). Germany, the central state of Europe, the most powerful European nation before the war, and, not least, the cause of the war, had to be included in this discussion for various reasons: first, because of its geographical position; second, because of its significant musical background; and third, and most important, as a nation that was divided (which, however, should be considered as a whole when engaging in discussions like this), with its Eastern part to provide insights about the process of the assimilation of rock music in the Eastern European context. Greece, on the other hand, is used as a country which, whereas not powerful as a state, has a cultural background not aligned with the Western European tradition as such, and is slightly remote geographically, almost a part of the Balkans, which allows us to see how rock music was received by people of a particularly distinct cultural background that was influenced, apart from the Western tradition, by Asia Minor, Turkey and other traditions. Finally, Italy is important both because of its political significance when it comes to its position during the war and how this changed in due course (its political past which was to lead eventually to important political quests that, as we are to see, affected the development of Italian rock music), but also because of its cultural background as a

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<sup>15</sup> Calvocoressi, p.177

country distinct for its vocal music, mostly expressed through its operatic tradition, and its characteristic *bel canto* singing style which historically dominated its indigenous popular music scene.

Another reason for narrowing down my research to these five countries is the fact that they carry distinctive continuities in the ways in which they accepted and developed rock idioms, and for the reason that their historical and social contexts at the moment of its reception share important similarities. Overall, the similar positions and situations in which these countries were found during the years concerned here are reflected in the fact that their engagement with rock music during the four phases of the assimilation process largely coincides. However, although these five countries seem to be perfectly aligned in regards to the timing of the phases of the assimilation process, inevitable small time-lags and overlaps exist due to the fact that at times the countries appear to enter or leave a phase at different times. Nonetheless, the time differences in these terms do not disrupt the process of assimilation as understood here, and in favour of a consistent clarity of narration it is worth here pointing out that the time boundaries of each phase as presented in the following chapters are not fixed, but are expandable in two directions, sometimes with specific chronologies of beginning and ending in specific countries to be impossible to track. This is why I turned to a chronological separation of the phases that is indicative, while at the same time as inclusive and accurate possible.

Needless to say, the prime example of a country that does not at first sight seem to align with the process of assimilation in these terms is Britain. The decision to include Britain in this study is one of the most important issues that need to be addressed here, mainly because Britain is always considered to be ‘centre of development and influence’ and not ‘of reception’ when it comes to discussions of popular music. Nevertheless, I suggest that Britain could not be excluded from this dissertation for reasons that are two-fold. First, Britain was initially on the receiving end of rock’n’roll culture, with the one and major difference that British musicians assimilated the idiom (for reasons that are to be seen in more detail) within a very brief period of time, converting rock’n’roll to rock. It needs to be pointed out here that the use of the term ‘rock’n’roll’ in this dissertation will be replaced by the use of the term ‘rock music’, which defines the extension and development of rock’n’roll after the British Invasion in the early 1960s. This should not



create any confusion, as rock music was itself based on rock'n'roll, and also on the musical cultures from where rock'n'roll sprang out of (blues, rhythm'n'blues), and it carried many of the features that characterized rock'n'roll in its initial manifestation, including, of course, african-american idioms. The term rock'n'roll will permanently cease being used in Chapter 4, where the 'period of imitation' is being discussed and which is partly dealing with the prevalence of the influence of the British Invasion in France, West and East Germany, Greece, and Italy. The second reason why Britain could not be excluded from this dissertation is because of the paradox that there is a continuity in the development of rock idioms in Britain (like progressive rock, punk) with the ways rock idioms developed in the rest of the countries discussed here as well. One could describe the situation as one where the British popular musicians and audiences seem to have had assimilated rock idioms, and then went on to further develop those, acting as protagonists in the creation of new rock styles, until they reached to a point of 're-assimilation'. Of course, a similar process existed in the USA as well. In fact, during the period discussed in this dissertation, the American and British popular music scenes were engaged in a continuous process of call and response that was mainly based on musical styles that sprang out of the influence of rock'n'roll through which they developed an anglo-american popular music centre that was in its turn in constant dialogue with many other parts of the world. All in all, Britain is used in this dissertation both as a musical centre as well as a musical receiver, since both its roles are of importance here.

The final point I want to address here is my decision to omit extensive reference to the multi-national network of the major record industries, although its importance for the development of international music should not be downplayed. This omission is one that is conscious, since what I am dealing with in this dissertation is the assimilation of musical idioms in the national popular musics as an 'internal', national process. More specifically, the kind of national 'ownership' I am tracing here is not to do with the material substance of music, but is instead 'ownership' of music based on its 'symbolic meaning'. On this I am following Bohlman who has stated that: 'The market-value of nationalist music can mean that the recording industry is able to make a certain type of financial claim to ownership of the musical object once it is reduced to CDs and other commodities of exchange'. He goes on: 'Ownership of commodities, however, is vastly

different from ownership of symbolic meanings'.<sup>16</sup> This is a position I am sharing here, in order to show that despite the fact that there is more to be argued in relation to the 'cultural imperialism' and 'globalisation' theses when it comes to the multi-national record industries, international market shares, and profit-orientated devices, and despite the fact that there is a valid case to be made against the straightforward acceptance of the 'anglo-american' centre of popular music as the main international 'musical imperialist', the extensive account of these issues could not benefit this dissertation in any way. This is partly because at the time when the process of assimilation began with the reception of rock'n'roll (in the mid-1950s) it is undoubtedly a one-way flow of influence that is taking place: from the USA to Europe. From my perspective, the process of assimilation of rock musical idioms that followed their initial reception is mainly to be seen in internal progressions that took place in each country itself, and had not been affected by the structure of the multi-national record companies in any straightforward ways that could affect the arguments made in this dissertation. Second, the material substance of music is not one that can be seen to influence directly the dialectics between the top-down and bottom-up tensions in which the sphere of 'national popular music' exists and in which the process of assimilation is taking place. This is mainly because the musical result of assimilation as dealt with here has, to turn to Bohlman again, a 'symbolic meaning' both for the people who create it as well as for the people who consume it. The symbolic meaning as understood and used here is to be seen as intuitive, freed from the militant pretenses of 'nationalism'. It is, I suggest, to be found in the ways in which 'national ownership' and 'national identity' are experienced within the nation itself and are expressed through the everyday lives of the people, manifested in a shared space where the tensions between top-down and bottom-up musical practices create the realm of 'national popular music'.

## **Methodology**

It is evident that the appropriate methodology for a comparative study like the one suggested here should be based on an interdisciplinary approach. Although music is the

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<sup>16</sup> Bohlman (2004), p.315: although Bohlman refers here to 'nationalist' music, I consider his statement to be straightforwardly applicable to the idea of music in the 'national' realm as this is used here.

centre around which the main research question revolves, it should be stressed from the outset that this is not a musicological study. The main object of observation here is the context that surrounds the music, in which the factors that led to the assimilation of rock musical idioms in the popular music scenes of Britain, France, Germany, Greece, and Italy existed. For the study of these contexts I have to an extent relied on secondary sources, and have employed an extensive literature review through which I have attempted to theorize the forces at play which made what I see as the final assimilation of rock musical idioms in these five European countries possible. By observing in a comparative way the existing literature on the popular music scenes of Britain, France, Germany, Greece, and Italy I have attempted to tease out the factors that contributed to the progression of rock musical idioms (as these were initially introduced through rock'n'roll) from being foreign, borrowed musical idioms during the phase of reception to becoming indispensable elements of the musical cultural capitals of these countries at the point of assimilation. My perspective should not be seen as ethnomusicological either, despite the use of ethnomusicological literature; rather, it leans towards the terrain of a sociological overview of the material, frequently overlapping with an approach borrowed from the field of cultural geography.

The chronological period covered in this study (roughly between 1955 and 1985), in combination with the time limit for conducting this PhD dissertation (roughly three years) rendered the possibility of fieldwork research in these countries ineffable but also unnecessary. The existing literature regarding the popular music of each country concerned here is satisfactorily extensive, and in cases when not sufficient sources existed in English, I could access the sources in their original language (having Greek as native language, and being able to read French and Italian, and to a lesser extent German). All in all, the availability of sources on the popular music of each country gave me the freedom to critically reflect on the process of assimilation of rock musical idioms in each and compare them in the light of the ideas of national identity and authenticity, as well as other issues arising from the comparative understanding of this development.

A significant guide during this journey has been the music itself, which, right from the beginning of this study, was taken into consideration in cross-reference with the information found in the relevant literature. The vast majority of the songs produced in

Britain, France, Germany, Greece, and Italy during the period studied are easily accessible in their recorded form, mainly on Youtube and other similar webpages. It was one of the advantages of my research (and of course, one of the factors that created the developments that led to my main research question), that the music dealt with here had been recorded and stored at the moment of its creation, and has found its way in becoming easily available to listeners at the current present. Examples of British, French, German, Greek, and Italian songs exist in abundance in their original versions. The ability to access the relevant sound material and use this in cross-reference with the available literature had been a valuable advantage during my efforts here, not least when I came to form my own position on specific music strands in each country, and when other scholars who had previously dealt with these seemed to be in disagreement. As has been mentioned above, the recorded sound material has been used as a key point of reference for the arguments made, but has not been dealt with in technical-analytical terms, as this was not considered an appropriate approach for what is primarily a culturally-orientated study.

Nevertheless, for the purposes of supporting from a musicological perspective the conclusions reached in this study I eventually turn in Chapter 6 to a more musicologically-orientated observation of selected songs. The technique used for this ‘analysis’ is neither musicological in the traditional sense, nor directly derived from the analytical approaches of popular musicologists like Philip Tagg, Allan Moore, Walter Everett and others. Instead, it is an effort to observe the songs in the light of all the above approaches, being further informed by the view that popular songs are not objects to be musicologically analysed in detail but rather objects of which the elements can reveal important aspects of the culture that created them if they are observed from specific angles. More specifically, the most immediate reason for considering a musicological study of the songs non-beneficial for this dissertation concerns the *reception* of rock’n’roll by European countries: that is to say, the way indigenous audiences *perceived* the musical styles that came from the USA. As will be seen in later chapters, especially in Part II of this dissertation, there was not always a clear idea of what rock’n’roll actually was in musical terms. In countries such as Italy and Greece the unavailability of musical information on rock and the inadequacy of the indigenous

media to provide audiences with relevant information had resulted in a situation where *all* popular music styles imported from the USA were perceived as rock'n'roll and were surrounded by the same connotations and associations as rock'n'roll: as a consequence, therefore, they were *treated as* rock'n'roll (see, for example, the 'unblackening' of Neil Sedaka's 'The King of Clowns' for the Italian market on p.171). I suggest here that audience perceptions, understanding and knowledge during the period of reception are of more significance, even though they might seem to defy musical detail and retrospective musical labels. This is why, when I eventually turn to discuss the music itself (p.285), I do not opt for a detailed musicological study but turn rather to what I have called 'close observation' of songs. A more detailed account of the methodology I am using for this 'musical-cultural' comparative study is discussed in Chapter 6.

To sum up, I aim in this dissertation to use the existing literature and available recorded song materials from Britain, France, Germany, Greece, and Italy in order to theorize the process of assimilation that I propose here. In order to support the conclusions reached I also turn to observation of the songs themselves. By doing this I have sought to bring to bear the comparative understanding of the surrounding contexts in which the process of assimilation takes place within the context of the music itself, although recognizing at all times that the two have always been and will always remain inseparable. The study is also characterized by both 'horizontal' (diachronic) and 'vertical' (synchronic) emphases through its combination of the cultural-historical and the comparative-contextual dimensions.

### **Literature review**

Due to the nature of this study, which is by and large based on secondary material, it is impossible to present here an exhaustive literature review. It is crucial, however, to consider here the different ways in which the key issues looked at in this dissertation have been dealt with in the academic scholarship. This is what I turn to do here in order to discuss some of the 'key sources' advised for the completion of this dissertation, as well as locate this study in the existing literature. I will begin by presenting how the main concepts that underpin this dissertation, authenticity in relation to national identity, have

been explored by other scholars. I will then turn to the discussion of studies that deal with rock music in Britain, France, Germany, Greece, and Italy, before I go on to consider examples of studies that deal with popular music in more than one country, either in comparative ways or not.

‘Authenticity’ is a term that carries a heavy load of connotations, and it appears in popular music literature in various guises, its treatment to often present conflicting views. For Grossberg (according to Connell and Gibson), authenticity has three dimensions: one grounded in the aesthetic experience as seen in ‘the skill and creativity of the artists’; the second in ‘the construction of the rhythmic and sexual body (often linked to dance and black music)’; and finally, in ‘the ability to articulate private but common desires, feelings and experiences, through a common language that constructs or expresses the notion of community’.<sup>17</sup> It has to be pointed out here that it is the latter dimension of authenticity that underpins this study, and that the ‘notion of community’ that accompanies authenticity from the perspective it is used here is that of ‘national identity’. National identity in relation to popular music has been dealt with by various authors: Bohlman’s *The Music of European Nationalism*<sup>18</sup> is a valuable work concerning music and national identity, and specifically valuable for my purposes since its focus is the European context. In this book Bohlman takes a broad consideration of music activities in Europe, and traces the historical connection between music and nationalism that has always characterized the European context. He is careful to separate the notions of national identity and nationalism. Bohlman points to the various ways in which national identity and authenticity have been historically interconnected in Europe, both in the past as well as in the current present. When dealing with the issue of music revivalism (an important feature of the ‘new nationalism’ of New Europe, and a continuous presence in the European music in all its serious, folk, and popular manifestations), Bohlman writes that:

[...] there are forms of revival that identify authenticity within restrictive national borders, whereas other forms recognize that the authenticity of certain styles, genres, and repertoires has always been capacious, in other words, open

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<sup>17</sup> John Connell and Chris Gibson, *Sound Tracks: Popular Music, Identity and Place* (London: Routledge, 2003), p.29

<sup>18</sup> Bohlman

to mixing the national and the international (Livingston 1999). Authenticity becomes important in new ways, but it does so by tolerating its own hybridity.<sup>19</sup>

The relationship between authenticity and hybridity is one that is important for my purposes, and will underpin my argument throughout. In *Sound Tracks*, Connell and Gibson<sup>20</sup> take a different approach (cultural geography) on the relationship between music and national identity, by mainly regarding music in its relationship with place on the one hand, and with mobility on the other. Their approach is multi-dimensional, and is not confined in one specific region and the musical output of this, but it extends to western and non-western music equally. When touching on the ability of popular music to evolve and develop, and its connection with memory and nostalgia, they make the point that:

[...] the new wave of nostalgia [...] has given history the ability to stimulate notions of identity and authenticity (and also commercial development), and mythologise local authentic spaces. In the face of the continued commercialism of popular music, and in a world of uncertainty, the quest for identity and meaning has been rekindled. Place became a critical musical resource, as a symbol in music (requiring strategic inauthenticity for adequate commodification), a means of national identity and the inspiration for ever-evolving local scenes. Invented traditions required an invented geography.<sup>21</sup>

The reference here to invented traditions (in allusion to Hobsbawm<sup>22</sup> and in parallel to imagined communities and the constructed nature of modern national identity) and the way this is mentioned in cross-reference with popular music, national identity, and authenticity, interconnected as these are with the commoditized nature of popular music itself, reveals the complexities of this issue, and presents some of the various things that need to be taken into account in these kinds of discussions. Taking a somewhat different perspective, Simon Frith in 'Music and Identity'<sup>23</sup> approaches the issue of identity by putting more emphasis on 'personal' identities. However, his approach at the same time

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid, p.322

<sup>20</sup> Connell and Gibson (2003)

<sup>21</sup> Ibid, p.277

<sup>22</sup> Eric Hobsbawm, 'Introduction: Inventing traditions' in *The Invention of Tradition*, Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (eds.), (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), pp.1-14

<sup>23</sup> Simon Frith, 'Music and Identity' in *Questions of Cultural Identity* (Stuart Hall and Paul du Gay (eds.), (London: Sage Publications, 2003), pp.108-127

stresses the importance of belonging, of one's position in the social context, in the formation of the identity of the individual. In his words: 'Music constructs our sense of identity through the direct experiences it offers of the body, time and sociability, experiences which enable us to place ourselves in imaginative cultural narratives'.<sup>24</sup> It is valid to argue, therefore, that among the several identities one person acquires at the same time (personal, ethnic, gender, local, etc.) national identity is also experienced through the position of the individual within the national context. From this perspective, the existence of popular music idioms in the cultural capital of any given nation are experienced by individuals as part of their identities, both on the personal, as well as on the national level. I would like here to present another approach to identity and popular music that is particularly relevant to my purposes here: Regev and Seroussi's *Popular Music and National Culture in Israel*.<sup>25</sup> In this book, the authors provide an overview of the relationship between popular music and national culture in Israel, by focusing mainly on the efforts towards the creation of authentic 'Israeliness' through music. Among two other musical strands they discuss (Songs of the Land of Israel and Oriental music), they also give an important account of the development of Israeli rock music. All in all, their argument that there is no single style of Israeli music that can be considered the sole authentic Israeli music, but many musical idioms co-exist in mutual borrowings and exchanges, whereas in the use of these idioms 'Israeliness' is still present is one that is of specific importance for my purposes here as well. Undoubtedly, numerous other scholars have made important contributions in terms of the relationship of popular music, national identity, and authenticity, but no exhaustive account of these can be provided here. Nonetheless, the ones mentioned above provide illuminating contributions to the relevant literature in valuable ways. Finally, the reference on Regev and Seroussi and their focus on the relationship between popular music and identity in Israel brings me to the next group of sources I shall now turn to discuss, which is the studies of popular music (and more particularly rock) in each of the countries considered in this dissertation.

Needless to say, there is an abundance of sources that concern rock music in Britain from various perspectives, and it is impossible to provide a complete list of those

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid, p.124

<sup>25</sup> Motti Regev and Edwin Seroussi, *Popular Music and National Culture in Israel* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2004)



here. Nonetheless, among the sources that deal with the development of British popular music, and more specifically rock music, some studies provided valuable insights for my purposes in this study. For instance, in Chambers's *Urban Rhythms*<sup>26</sup> the history of British popular music is explored in constant reference to its relationship with music of the USA. This is looked at from various perspectives, most importantly history and social criticism. All in all, Chambers provides a comprehensive study of British popular music and its development after the influence of rock'n'roll. Bradley, on the other hand, traces the development of British rock within a narrower time period (1955-64) in his *Understanding Rock'n'Roll*.<sup>27</sup> In doing so, Bradley makes a detailed discussion of the early years of rock in Britain, and provides a thorough account of the processes that led to the early assimilation of the rock idioms by the bands of the British Invasion, by placing emphasis on the importance the active music making had for the British rock fans during the first rock'n'roll years, when for the young British rock fans it provided a means of resistance and expression. From a different perspective, in his *Land without Music*, Andrew Blake provides various examples of the ways in which the British music of the twentieth century has developed in such ways as to evoke a significant sense of identity: in the process of doing so, Blake's work makes extensive reference to the progressive nature of rock which is particularly relevant for our purposes here.<sup>28</sup> Indeed, the literature mentioned here concerning British rock is by and large under-represented. This is partly because, due to Britain's position as one of the main representatives of the anglo-american popular music centre, there is an abundance of information concerning British popular music in the vast majority of the literature that deals with post-war anglo-american popular music from any perspective. Be that as it may, both Chambers' and Bradley's work have been used extensively in this study, and Blake's contribution has been considerably useful, particularly at the moments when the distinction between American and British popular music seemed to be a somewhat complicating task.

In contrast to the extensive literature on the issue of British popular music, the literature on rock music in the rest of the countries concerned here is considerably less

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<sup>26</sup> Iain Chambers, *Urban Rhythms, Pop Music and Popular Culture* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1985)

<sup>27</sup> Dick Bradley, *Understanding Rock 'n' Roll: Popular Music in Britain 1955-1964* (Buckingham: Open University Press, 1992)

<sup>28</sup> Andrew Blake, *The Land without Music: Music, Culture and Society in twentieth-century Britain* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997)

extensive, especially if one is to speak about sources in the English language. There are, nevertheless, key sources on each. For example, a notable contribution to the knowledge of the history of rock music in France is made by Looseley's various writings, most important among these for this study being *Popular Music in Contemporary France*, in which the author traces the integration of rock idioms in the French popular music. He supports the argument that the hybrid French music that resulted from the influence of the rock idiom is one that could be seen as 'authentic'.<sup>29</sup> Additionally, the collection of essays in Dauncey's and Cannon's *Popular Music in France from Chanson to Techno* includes contributions concerning the integration of rock in the French culture (e.g.: Teillet)<sup>30</sup>, and provides information concerning French popular music at various points in history in a broader sense. On the other hand, Portis's *French Frenzies* does not only present a social history of the French popular music, but also comments on the differences of this with the popular music of the anglo-american musical centre in terms of cultural history, focusing more particularly on the ways in which and the reasons why social criticism and political content appear in the French song in more straightforward ways.<sup>31</sup> In all the above sources, there are direct and indirect references to the particularities of the French popular music, that remain visible even in its more rock-influenced versions.

When it comes to the topic of German rock, I consider Poiger's contribution a notable one. Centering her work on comparative studies of rock music in the two Germanys, she does not limit herself in providing information on the history of rock, but she also sheds light on the different processes that took place in the two states and which led to differences in the development of their rock scenes. Aside from the various journal articles and essays in edited compilations where she discusses these issues in narrower scopes, it is in her book *Jazz, Rock and Rebels* where she gives a broader account of the ways rock idioms challenged the cultural and moral ideals of both Germanys. Whereas

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<sup>29</sup> David Looseley (2), *Popular Music in Contemporary France: Authenticity, Politics, Debate* (Oxford: Berg 2003)

<sup>30</sup> Philippe Teillet, 'Rock and culture in France: ways, processes, and conditions of integration' in *Popular Music in France from Chanson to Techno*, Hugh Dauncey and Steve Cannon (eds.), (Hants: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2003), pp.171-190

<sup>31</sup> Larry Portis, *French Frenzies: A Social History of Popular Music in France* (Virtualbookworm.com Publishing, 2004)

Poiger points to the different ways each German state expressed its dissatisfaction with rock'n'roll, she manages at the same time to show the shared moral and cultural mentality that existed in the country as a whole, despite the political separation and the different regimes.<sup>32</sup> German popular music is touched upon by Larkey in various cases, where he also speaks about both of the German states, more specifically on the topic of language choice for the lyrics, as well as the issue of americanization.<sup>33</sup> Wicke has written extensively and from various perspectives on the topic of popular music in general and rock music in particular, focusing mainly on East Germany.<sup>34</sup> Information about East Germany are also found in Ryback's account of the development of rock in the countries of the Soviet bloc.<sup>35</sup> Needless to say, due to the nature of the regime in East Germany, discussions of rock music in this context, including the ones by Wicke and Ryback, largely emphasize the political importance of rock, the attitude that the nation-state kept towards it, and its use by the audience as an expression of resistance, revealing at the same time that the political meaning given to rock music in cases was a matter of the tension created by the way it was viewed by the authorities.

The issue of Greek rock is largely absent from the English-speaking literature, as far as I am concerned. Apart from the section in *The Continuum Encyclopedia of Popular Music* that is devoted to Greece, the only source in the English-speaking academic literature which touches on the issue of rock music in Greece comes from the discipline of literature. This is Papanikolaou's *Singing Poets*<sup>36</sup> which, although referring to rock

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<sup>32</sup> Uta G. Poiger (1), *Jazz, Rock and Rebels: Cold war Politics and American Culture in a Divided Germany*, (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2000)

<sup>33</sup> Edward Larkey, 'Just for fun? Language choice in German popular music' in *Popular Music and Society*, 24/3 (2000), pp.1-20; 'Postwar German popular music: americanization, the Cold War, and the post-war Heimat' in *Music and German National Identity*, Celia Applegate and Pamela Potter (eds.), (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2002), pp.234-250

<sup>34</sup> Peter Wicke, "'The times they are a-changing'": rock music and political change in East Germany' in *Rockin' the Boat: Mass Music and Mass Movements*, Reebee Garofalo (ed.), (Boston: South End Press, 1992), pp.81-92; Peter Wicke and John Shepherd, "'The Cabaret is dead'": rock culture as state enterprise – the political organization of rock in East Germany' in *Popular Music: Politics, Policies, Institutions*, Tony Bennett, Simon Frith, Lawrence Grossberg, John Shepherd, and Graeme Turner (eds.), (London: Routledge, 1993), pp.25-36; Peter Wicke (2), 'Young people and popular music in East Germany: focus on a scene' in *Communication Research*, 12 (1985), pp.319-325

<sup>35</sup> Timothy W. Ryback, *Rock Around the Bloc: A History of Music in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990)

<sup>36</sup> Dimitris Papanikolaou, *Singing Poets: Literature and Popular Music in France and Greece* (London: Legenda, 2007)

music through focusing on the work of a specific songwriter Dionysis Savopoulos, does in the process give insights about rock music and the surrounding context in Greece at the time when Savopoulos made his important contribution to Greek rock music. There are, nonetheless, important contributions in the Greek literature that give satisfactory information on the issue. For example, Mpozinis' sociological reading of the history of Greek rock consists of one of the very few academic texts on the topic; his book gives a valuable overview of the social history of rock in Greece, emphasizing the differences between the Greek context and other countries, more importantly Britain and the USA, and commenting on how this difference of context is to be seen in many respects as responsible for the different, and slower, development of rock music in the country.<sup>37</sup> Another valuable source on Greek rock is Ntaloukas' book which, although not an academic text itself, provides a valuable overview of Greek rock music and rock 'culture' more broadly from its pre-history to the early 1990s, observing this in cross-reference with the social and political history of the time.<sup>38</sup>

Finally, Italian rock has been dealt with by a range of scholars and has been addressed from various perspectives: Prato,<sup>39</sup> Fabbri,<sup>40</sup> Fiori,<sup>41</sup> Gundle<sup>42</sup> and Minganti<sup>43</sup> among others contribute to the knowledge of Italian popular music and more specifically rock, often leading to understandings of how popular music functioned and developed in Italy. Parentin's *Rock Progressivo Italiano* focuses on Italian progressive rock (the first specifically Italian rock appropriation), while at the same time exploring the social and historical situation in Italy in the 1970s, the time when Italian progressive rock dominated

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<sup>37</sup> Nikos Mpozinis, *Rock pagkosmiotita kai Elliniki Topikotita: I koinoniki istoria tou rock stis chores katagogis tou kai stin Ellada* (Athens: Nefeli Publications, 2008)

<sup>38</sup> Manolis Ntaloukas, *Elliniko Rock: Istoria tis Neanikis Koultouras apo ti Genia tou Chaous mechri to thanato tou Pavlou Sidiropoulou (1945-1990)*, (Athens: Agkyra, 2006)

<sup>39</sup> Prato (2007), pp.441-462

<sup>40</sup> Franco Fabbri, 'The system of canzone in Italy today' in *World Music, Politics and Social Change*, Simon Frith (ed.), (New York: Manchester University Press, 1989)

<sup>41</sup> Umberto Fiori, 'Rock music and politics in Italy', Michael Burgoyne (trns.), in *Popular Music*, 4: Performers and Audiences (1984), pp.261-277

<sup>42</sup> Stephen Gundle, 'Adriano Celentano and the origins of rock and roll in Italy' in *Journal of Modern Italian Studies*, 11/3 (2006), pp.367-386

<sup>43</sup> Franco Minganti, 'Rock'n'roll in Italy: was it true Americanization?' in *Cultural Transmissions and Receptions: American Mass Culture in Europe*, Rob Kroes, Robert W. Rydell, and Doecko F.J. Bosscher (eds.), (Amsterdam: VU University Press, 1993), pp.139-151

Italian popular music.<sup>44</sup> Similarly, Tarli in his *Beat Italiano* provides information concerning the historical, cultural, and political context of Italy in the 1960s in the process of discussing the Italian beat movement which was short-lived but nevertheless important for the future development of Italian rock music in general.<sup>45</sup> As has been mentioned above, information about the history of the popular music in each country under consideration here is found in the *Continuum Encyclopedia of Popular Music of the World*, and more specifically its seventh volume, which is centred around accounts of the popular musics of European countries, including all the countries concerned here as well.<sup>46</sup> Undoubtedly, the sources mentioned above represent only a handful of the literature that has been consulted during the process of completing this dissertation, and numerous other sources were referred to in an effort to create an understanding of rock music in each of the countries under consideration here that would be as informative and inclusive as possible.

Indeed, whereas information on rock music in each country considered here is satisfactory and easily accessible, I did not come across any study that takes a comparative approach to the wide range of countries used here and along the lines employed by the present study. Nevertheless, Stuart Mitchell does take a comparative approach to the late-1960s relationship between popular music and cultural revolt in France, the USA, and Britain.<sup>47</sup> His discussion is not, however, concerned with assimilation at all, although he succeeds in giving us valuable information regarding the relationship of popular music and revolt in each of these countries at a specific period and how this differs from other countries. Another instance where some of the countries used in this dissertation have been dealt with in a comparative way, albeit from a narrower scope, is Chris Anderton's study of different European versions of progressive rock. In his discussion, Anderton manages to highlight the interesting paradox that surrounds the genre of progressive rock: indeed, the striking differences found in the sound of the indigenous progressive rock scenes when these are compared between them, had resulted

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<sup>44</sup> Andrea Parentin, *Rock Progressivo Italiano: An Introduction to Italian Progressive Rock* (Kindle edition: CreateSpace.com, 2011)

<sup>45</sup> Tiziano Tarli, *Beat Italiano – dai capelloni a Bandiera Gialla* (Roma: Alberto Castelvechi, 2005)

<sup>46</sup> John Shepherd, David Horn, Dave Laing (eds.), *Continuum Encyclopedia of Popular Music of the World*, v.VII: Europe, (London: Continuum, 2005)

<sup>47</sup> Stuart P. Mitchell, 'You say you want a revolution? Popular music and revolt in France, the United States, and Britain during the late 1960s' in *Historia Actual Online*, (2005), pp.7-18

from the similar mentality that surrounded progressive rock in each country. More specifically, it was the drive to experimentation that surrounded progressive rock that made it so open to diversification during the 1970s, and gave it the capacity to emerge as the manifestation of specifically idiosyncratic styles of rock in the European countries discussed here.<sup>48</sup>

Indeed, whereas comparative studies that deal with the countries this dissertation discusses are very few, various studies exist that discuss popular music in more than one country from a number of perspectives, albeit not necessarily by taking a comparative approach. Wallis and Malm's influential and frequently cited *Big Sounds from Small Peoples* is an important example of how popular music has been dealt with in a comparative way, focusing particularly on the music industry. The countries discussed (Jamaica, Trinidad, Tunisia, Tanzania, Kenya, Sri Lanka, Finland, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Chile, and Wales) are very different from the ones this dissertation is concerned with, but Wallis and Malm's approach, as well as their introduction of the term 'transculturation', offers valuable examples for studies like this, as it makes important points concerning globalization and how this manifests differently in different contexts.<sup>49</sup> Tony Mitchell in his *Popular Music and Local Identity* deals particularly with issues of globalization and nationalism in four countries, but does not focus specifically on rock and does not take a comparative approach. Mitchell rather presents four separate case studies making separate accounts of Czech rock music, Italian house music, Australian rock, and pop music in New Zealand, focusing mainly on the situation in these countries in the 1990s.<sup>50</sup> Mitchell separates popular music's development in four phases: the 1950s rock'n'roll, the diversity of rock musics in the 1960s, the impact of punk and reggae in the 1970s, and the multiplicity of musical languages and technologies of the 1980s, as these are found in rap, hip hop, dance music, techno and other hybrid forms. Hence, Mitchell's focus is not based on the reception and development of a specific musical idiom, but it is rather an account of the changes that appear to have occurred in the

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<sup>48</sup> Chris Anderton, 'A many-headed beast: progressive rock as European meta-genre' in *Popular Music*, 29/3 (2010), pp.417-435

<sup>49</sup> Roger Wallis, and Krister Malm, *Big Sounds from Small Peoples: The Music Industry in Small Countries* (London: Constable, 1984)

<sup>50</sup> Tony Mitchell, *Popular Music and Local Identity: Rock, Pop, and Rap in Europe and Oceania* (London: Leicester University Press, 1996)

popular music scenes he discusses through the interaction of these with various ‘foreign’ musical idioms during the years of ‘globalization’: he specifically sees the development of what is considered to be ‘world musics’ as the indication for the rise of ‘national popular musics’.<sup>51</sup> Another scholar who focuses on world music is Taylor who in *Global Pop* explores the development of different musical styles in various contexts, albeit from an approach that is again not comparative by definition.<sup>52</sup> Regev, on the other hand, takes a comparative approach and, despite the fact that the countries he discusses (Israel and Argentina) are substantially different than the ones considered here, his work is particularly relevant for our purposes since he mainly focuses on rock music.<sup>53</sup> Notwithstanding their obvious differences from the content of this study, all the sources mentioned above are important, not only for providing information on popular music in different locations, but mainly for making themselves available as examples of the different ways in which studies of popular music that deal with more than one country (either comparatively or not) have been approached by other scholars. Moreover, by focusing on the situation of popular music in more than one country, these sources make inevitable allusions to the tensions between the global and the local/national, and they therefore provide intentional and unintentional references to the relationship between popular music and identity in each of the countries they consider.

Finally, it needs to be pointed out here that, regardless of the numerous studies that deal with the issue of the assimilation of rock music and the development of national rock scenes, none of the literature I am familiar with has gone on to present a comparative study between Britain, France, Germany, Greece, and Italy in these terms, or presents the same process of assimilation with the one suggested here. What I aim to have achieved with this study is to present a valid and detailed description of my understanding of the process of assimilation of rock idioms in these five countries, in order to pinpoint the factors that led to this assimilation, and identify the ways in which these operated for the final outcome. I aspire to present here a process of assimilation that could be applied to contexts outside the European boundaries (which are characterized by different socio-economic, political, and cultural histories during the years discussed

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<sup>51</sup> Ibid, p.2

<sup>52</sup> Timothy D. Taylor, *Global Pop: World Music, World Markets* (New York: Routledge, 1997)

<sup>53</sup> Regev (2007), pp.317-341

here). In addition, I suggest that the process of assimilation suggested here could also be used for the study of musical styles other than rock music that appear to have become ‘internationalized’ later (hip hop, dance etc.). The study of different contexts in these terms could shed further light on the ways in which varying historical, social, political, economic and cultural contexts can affect the assimilation of musical idioms. On the other hand, the discussion of how this process of assimilation can be applied to musical idioms other than rock could lead to ideas of how the process of assimilation could be seen to have occurred later in history and, if at all, even today, when the internet revolution provides what is sometimes considered to be an uncontrollable affluence of information from many localities from past and present.

### **Structure: Outline and Overview**

This dissertation is structured in three parts. Part I (the introductory Chapter 1 and Chapter 2) deals with the contextual and conceptual framework that underpins this project. More specifically, Chapter 2 follows the extensive introductory chapter with discussions of the musical context that surrounds this dissertation, initially by presenting what were considered to be the ‘national popular musics’ of each of the countries discussed here before and alongside rock’n’roll, as well as by taking account of the emergence of rock’n’roll music itself. It then goes on to consider the conceptual framework where the rest of the dissertation is based. It does so by firstly highlighting the relationship between music and politics in a broader sense, before it then goes on to connect this with the topics of Americanization and globalization. It then goes on to consider the importance of the nation-state in relation to the tensions between the local (national) and the global (international), before it eventually turns to discuss the core idea of this study, namely the relationship between popular music and authenticity as these are seen from the scope of the assimilation of rock musical idioms and their possible alignment with the national identity of the countries with which I am dealing here.

Part II (Chapters 3 and 4) is concerned with the first two phases of the process of assimilation. Chapter 3 discusses the Reception phase: it deals with the social, economic, political, and technological situation of each country during the mid- and late-1950s in order to set the scene for the arrival of rock’n’roll and its first interaction with the adult



and the youth audiences in each country. Issues like moral panics, the generation gap and American imperialism are brought up in order to enhance our understanding of the tensions that surrounded rock'n'roll during its first appearance in the countries under consideration here, tensions which contributed fundamentally in giving rock'n'roll the shape it initially took during its early days in these five countries. Finally, it discusses rock'n'roll as a musical style, focusing on the ways in which it was initially treated by indigenous performers, audiences, and music industries. Chapter 4 explores the phase of imitation by initially considering imitation as a result of the top-down institutionalization of rock'n'roll by the mainstream music industries and broadcasting systems in these countries. It gives an account of the ways in which the developments of technology, economy, and the state of music industry in each country allowed for such an institutionalization to occur. It then goes on to present the institutionalization of rock'n'roll both in terms of its status as a 'cultural idiom', but most importantly in terms of its status as a 'musical style', as this is being evident in the versions of rock'n'roll that the indigenous record companies were producing at the time which often aimed to conceal the music's (african-)American character. The chapter then goes on to discuss the distinct case of Britain that, whereas on the one hand was also going through a process of institutionalization similar to the other countries, it nevertheless appears to have assimilated the rock'n'roll idiom on the other hand. The unique ways in which this had happened (in contexts outside the mainstream, in the local clubs and live music networks) indicate the importance of the bottom-up responses to the top-down music treatments. Finally, the chapter goes on to discuss the influence of the British version of rock idiom on both American, as well as French, German, Greek, and Italian popular musics. This influence is what had created the beat crazes that appeared during this phase in each of the countries discussed here, and which by extension created what I see as the 'bottom-up' imitation as this is evident in the first efforts of the youth cultures of these countries to actively create and play rock music themselves.

Part III (Chapters 5, 6, and the concluding Chapter 7) deals with the phases of the active development and the full assimilation of rock idioms in these five European countries. Chapter 5 explores the development of rock idioms through the incorporation of national musical elements. The chapter tries to show the important influence of the

political context of the time and the existence of the counterculture for the emergence of more idiosyncratic versions of rock music, especially at the underground musical networks. It tries to exemplify the ways in which the youth cultures of this time of political upheaval used rock idioms to express their political anxieties, creating in this way rock musical styles that were particular to each country. The social and political situations in the countries are discussed in cross-reference with the existence of the counterculture and its surrounding alternative and underground networks of communication that allowed for such music developments that would not have been easily accepted by the mainstream music industries. The chapter ends by moving the discussion on observations of rock music itself, focusing specifically on two styles that I argue encapsulate the arguments made earlier in the chapter: progressive rock and the use of rock idioms by the new generation of singer-songwriters that resurfaced during the time. Chapter 6 takes on from this point in order to describe the full assimilation of rock music in Britain, France, Germany, Greece, and Italy. After presenting the influence of punk as what I see as the ‘final step towards assimilation’, Chapter 6 initially turns to an account of the roles the nation-states of these five European countries have played in this assimilation process, before it turns to discuss music itself. Musically, the evidence of assimilation is presented from two perspectives: first, as the emergence of *national rock scenes*, where I discuss the version of rock music in each country that can more readily indicate assimilation; and second, as the constant and intuitive use of rock musical idioms in the popular music of these countries. References to assimilation, authenticity and national identity hover throughout the chapter. Finally, the concluding Chapter 7 is an overview of the preceding chapters, bringing the arguments made in each chapter together and summarizing the important issues that have been raised. The opportunity is also taken to suggest ways in which the approach undertaken in this dissertation could be used in future research.

## Chapter 2

### Contexts and Concepts

The title of this dissertation is one that might appear at first sight highly problematic. The idea that foreign musical idioms become *assimilated* in different cultures, in the process possibly changing them, is not in itself perhaps so difficult to grasp. My main concern here, however, is rather more specific: *which* processes and factors lead to such assimilation, and *how* they lead to it. This is not a simple problem of reception theory, nor is it some kind of process that manifests in the same way in every case, since each culture is different, despite the fact that different countries may also share many notable similarities. Because this study as a whole offers an account of the processes that underlie the assimilation of rock music in five European countries in terms of what I argue are recognizable initial stages of reception, imitation, and development leading to a further stage of assimilation characterized by changed notions of ‘national identity’ and ‘authenticity’, it is quite evident that some clarification of fundamental and problematic concepts is called for. The acknowledgment of this also recognizes the necessity for setting up a conceptual and contextual framework that will serve to underpin the rest of this study.

The main focus of this dissertation, which is the spread and assimilation of rock musical idioms in British, French, German, Greek, and Italian popular music scenes can also be partly understood as the concern with the spread and assimilation of african-american musical idioms as these were carried through rock'n'roll and later rock music. Undoubtedly, one might well complain that the term ‘african-american musical idioms’ is itself a contested and over-worn concept, and that it merits further discussion and critical consideration of the range of debates around it.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, turning here to such a

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<sup>1</sup> Philip Tagg, ‘Open Letter: “Black Music”, “Afro-American Music” and “European Music”’ in *Popular Music*, 8/3, African Music (October 1989), pp.285-298; Alan P. Merriam, ‘The African Idiom in Music’ in *The Journal of American Folklore*, 75/296 (April – June, 1962), pp.120-130; Paul Gilroy, *There ain’t no Black in the Union Jack: the Cultural Politics of Race and Nation* (London: Hutchinson, 1987); Barry Shank, ‘From Rice to Ice: the face of race in rock and pop’ in *The Cambridge Companion to Pop and Rock*, Simon Frith, Will Straw and John Street (eds.), (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp.256-271; Amiri Baraka, ‘Black music: its roots, its popularity, its commercial prostitution’ in *Folk Music and Modern Sound*, Ferris William and Hart, Mary L. (eds.) (Mississippi: University Press of Mississippi,

discussion would detract the attention from the main research question presented in this study and would constitute too much of a detour from the consideration of the process of assimilation of rock idioms in these European countries. I shall therefore simply seek to clarify at this point that, although I acknowledge the complexities of the term ‘african-american musical idioms’, it will be used here to indicate those elements of rock’n’roll that stem from rhythm and blues as well as older blues traditions, and which were not considered to be derivatives of the European music tradition as this was sometimes understood by more traditional music scholarship (i.e., in relation to European classical music). Also, the term is undoubtedly vague at a different level, given that african-american musical idioms had already been disseminated throughout the rest of the world during the earlier part of the twentieth century through the agency of jazz and other related styles such as ragtime, so that the encounter with rock’n’roll had certainly not been the first musical experience of african-american musics by Europeans in these terms. However, it can be argued that jazz never became fully assimilated as a popular music idiom in the vernacular of any country; it rather followed a completely different path and could even, with the benefit of hindsight, be seen to have been transformed into what might now even be seen as an elitist musical culture of its own. Thus, in this chapter I initially discuss rock’n’roll in the light of its connection with african-american musical idioms, which are largely considered to be its main influence. I then turn to consider the popular music backgrounds of Britain, France, Germany, Greece, and Italy in order to locate the musical context in which rock’n’roll landed in each case. As part of this I also consider pre-existing musical idioms in these countries that were regarded as ‘national musical elements’ of popular music, as well as musical idioms that co-existed with rock’n’roll and best represented their ‘national’ popular music. Present in this discussion is the acknowledgement of the fact that the popular musics of these countries had already been familiar with aspects of african-american musical idioms, as these were encountered through jazz. Nevertheless, the distinction between african-american musical idioms as carried through rock’n’roll and jazz will be made later in this chapter.

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1982), pp.177-193; Emmett G. Price III, Tammy L. Kernodle, Maxile J. Horace Jr. (eds.), *Encyclopedia of African-American Music* (California: ABC-CLIO, LLC, 2011)

The reception of rock'n'roll by Europeans is the starting point of the process of assimilation that is the main focus of this dissertation, and for this reason it is necessary to clarify both what this musical style is and represents, as well as what the situation of the popular music at the time of its reception was. These two considerations, which serve to set the 'musical context' within which the discussion of the process of assimilation is based, largely constitute the first part of this chapter.

The second part of the chapter presents certain concepts that will be used throughout the dissertation in order to clarify the context of their use. The discussion of rock'n'roll, as will be seen later, brings up certain ideas about the political implications of popular music in general, and rock'n'roll in particular, both in its representations and also its institutionalized context. One of the first and most prominent connections of rock'n'roll with politics, along with its exploding popularity and its reception throughout the world, is the idea of American cultural imperialism, discussed separately later in this chapter, and which is then extended to the more challenging ideas relevant to globalization, another concept that needs to be situated before it appears in the course of the later chapters of this study. Issues arising from the interconnections between rock music's relation to politics, cultural imperialism, and globalization are followed by a brief discussion of the role that nation-states themselves have played in the process of assimilation through institutions that act both as mediators of foreign idioms through international relations and also as gatekeepers of some notion – however ideological – of an homogeneous and consistent national unity within their borders. Thus, speaking about the role of the nation-states in these terms raises certain questions concerning the actual use of concepts like 'national identity' which will be discussed towards the end of this chapter. More particularly, 'national identity' as applied to popular music scenes that use foreign musical idioms is a concept that needs to be critically addressed. The second part of this chapter is therefore to be seen as providing the conceptual framework for this dissertation.

We shall begin our discussion by turning to a further consideration of rock'n'roll both as musical style as well as cultural idiom.

## 1. Musical context

### **‘...lose your mind, out of control, I now pronounce you rock’n’roll’: interpreting rock’n’roll**

It is generally accepted that rock’n’roll did not suddenly appear from out of nowhere at a specific moment in time, but it pre-existed in certain forms of other musical styles, and it was only when the time for the right combination of technical, economic, institutional, and musical factors occurred that it found the possibility to ‘emerge’ as a visible popular music style in its own terms.<sup>2</sup> Although its musical predecessors will be discussed in more detail later in this section, rock’n’roll is most closely associated with the sounds of rhythm’n’blues. As Ford argues, a key figure for the first years of rock’n’roll emergence was Alan Freed, a commercial disk jockey in Cleveland who, by being one of the first disk jockeys to play original rhythm’n’blues during his show in the early 1950s, exposed this musical style to larger, youth audiences. Freed combined the broadcast of rhythm’n’blues records with ‘his new phrase and his dynamic promotion efforts’, a fact that further helped in increasing the already growing popularity of rhythm’n’blues among the young.<sup>3</sup> The huge success with which Freed’s program was met when in Cleveland, led him to become a disc jockey in New York in 1953 where he continued programming radio shows by playing songs mainly drawn by the black rhythm’n’blues style.<sup>4</sup> Rhythm’n’blues, as Altschuler suggests, combined african-american musical characteristics like the blues narratives of turbulent emotions, the jubilation, the steady beat, hand clapping, the call and response technique found in gospel, emphatic dance rhythms, and vocalists who shouted, growled, and falsettoed over guitars and pianos, bass drums stressing a 2-4 beat, and a honking tenor saxophone;<sup>5</sup> and parents who expressed a constant disapproval of rhythm’n’blues,<sup>6</sup> and not without a reason, since it was a style the popularity of which was rising notably among the younger generation. The original

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<sup>2</sup> Roy Shuker, *Understanding Popular Music* (Oxon: Routledge, 2005), p.37; Charlie Gillett, *The Sound of the City: The Rise of Rock&Roll*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., (London: Souvenir Press, 1996), p.3

<sup>3</sup> Larry Ford, ‘Geographic factors in the origin, evolution, and diffusion of rock and roll music’ in *Journal of Geography*, 70/8 (1971), p.459

<sup>4</sup> Colin Larkin (ed.), ‘Freed, Alan’ in *the Guinness Encyclopedia of Popular Music*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., v.2 (Middlesex: Guinness Publishing, 1995), p.1551

<sup>5</sup> Glen Altschuler, *All Shook Up: How Rock ‘n’ Roll Changed America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), p.11

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid*, p.20

version of 'Sh-Boom' by the Chords, issued on the Cat label, a subsidiary of Atlantic, appeared in the Rhythm and Blues category early in the summer of 1954, and by July it broke into the national charts as a best-selling pop song, being the first rhythm'n'blues record (after many other successful ones) to actually reach the top ten and to generate a great degree of enthusiasm. The song, which became thoroughly covered (e.g., from the Crew Cuts), is considered by Carl Belz to be the first rock record.<sup>7</sup> The rise of rhythm'n'blues in popularity prompted many country and western bands to incorporate it in their repertoires; a more obvious contribution was that of Bill Haley and the Comets in Detroit who, with 'Rock Around the Clock' and 'Shake, Rattle, and Roll' (recorded in 1954) marked, according to Ford, the birth of rock'n'roll.<sup>8</sup>

By 1954 rhythm'n'blues records became more 'polite', but by this time rock'n'roll had already been given its own name and started making its appearance as a distinctive musical style.<sup>9</sup> However, rhythm'n'blues was not the only musical style that rock'n'roll drew on. It consisted of elements of country music as well as rhythm'n'blues and kept the basic characteristics of both. At the same time it included the simplicity and immediacy of pop songs, mostly in terms of lyrics.<sup>10</sup> According to Belz, this combination of a rhythm'n'blues beat with a lyrical content derived from pop music, is evident in the recurring images of angels, and perfect idylls, or eternal love.<sup>11</sup> All in all, this new musical style was something entirely different from what was being promoted in the American mainstream at this period. In Larry Ford's words,

Basically, rock and roll music emerged from a combining of black rhythm and blues and white country and western into a type of music that was acceptable to the adherents of both styles. Its formation also represented a geographically-based revolt by 'the provinces' against an old cultural capital (New York City) which was not fulfilling the needs of a great many people in the country.<sup>12</sup>

Indeed, the newly developed combination of musical styles came in stark contrast to the kind of popular music that was prevalent in the USA at that time, which was Tin Pan

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<sup>7</sup> Carl Belz, *The Story of Rock* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1969), pp.25-26

<sup>8</sup> Ford, p.459

<sup>9</sup> Altschuler, p.11

<sup>10</sup> Mpozinis, p.96

<sup>11</sup> Belz, p.31

<sup>12</sup> Ford, p.456

Alley and its familiar formulaic predictability. As Bradley reminds us, there had been a gradual growth of interest on the part of American youth in rhythm'n'blues music before the emergence of rock'n'roll.<sup>13</sup> Although this interest of the American teenager audiences for more marginal race music might lead some to think that they were actively making a political choice in standing against the racism of the society they were living in, as well as expressing their dissatisfaction with the conservatism surrounding them, the history of rock'n'roll reveals a different process of happenings, which results from a combination of changes in the social position of younger people, affluence, technological developments, and leisure industries. Keightley, for example, argues that we should not interpret the preference of 1950s teenagers for african-american musical idioms as politically influenced; instead, it would be better to consider the inclusion of black styles in the white mainstream as a result of 'institutional demands'.<sup>14</sup> In the light of Ford's and Bradley's arguments, Keightley's position makes absolute sense. Since the music promoted by the official culture was one that did not satisfy the newly emergent consumer group consisted of teenage listeners, then it was time for a new musical style to be developed and distributed. As Peterson writes, '[t]he point is that this market demand had been growing gradually for over a decade and remained largely unsatiated because the decision-makers in the culture industry simply did not recognize that it was there'.<sup>15</sup>

Bloomfield presents this same situation by pointing out that before the emergence of rock'n'roll the popular music produced at the time was within the limits of family entertainment, in the sense that it had as its main goal to be kept at a standard formula that no-one would find offensive. Reasonably enough, this system of musical production caused a certain degree of homogeneity of musical outcome, something that led to the emergence of independent labels and local radio stations that promoted the growth of regional music styles.<sup>16</sup> As Shuker argues, many independent record labels that recorded musical styles beyond the major record companies of the then-prevailing popular music were introduced in the years 1948-1954, while radio stations now embraced the new

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<sup>13</sup> Bradley, p.56

<sup>14</sup> Keir Keightley, 'Reconsidering rock' in *The Cambridge Companion to Pop and Rock*, Frith, Simon, Straw, Will and Street, John (eds.), (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p.114

<sup>15</sup> Richard A. Peterson, 'Why 1955? Explaining the Advent of Rock Music' in *Popular Music*, 9/1 (January, 1990), p.98

<sup>16</sup> Terry Bloomfield, 'It's sooner than you think: or Where are we in the History of Rock music?' *New Left Review*, 190 (November-December 1991), p.61



musical styles as material that attracted attention.<sup>17</sup> It was the local performers who made a notable appearance through this network of independent music production that the major record labels targeted and started signing up when they realized the potential of these local styles.<sup>18</sup> In fact, this relationship between majors and independents is persistent and undoubtedly very important for the history of popular music, and it is something that will be further commented on in Chapter 5 which deals with the phase of the development of rock music in the European countries under consideration here.

The different factors that facilitated the development of rock'n'roll at this time are commented on by Richard A. Peterson who, while speaking about changes of performers and audiences, also emphasizes the importance of the development that the American commercial cultural industry was going through in the mid-fifties as the main factor for the rock'n'roll revolution.<sup>19</sup> A part of these changes that is of a vital significance in these terms is the role of the technological developments that favoured at the outmost these transformations the commercial cultural industries were experiencing. It is generally agreed that the major contribution to the development of rock'n'roll as a social phenomenon lay in the technology that underpinned the music's distribution, like the introduction of the 45 rpm single that coincided with the appearance of the first rock'n'roll recordings.<sup>20</sup> According to Negus, it was these technological developments that at the same time provided the possibilities for radio stations to broadcast a more diverse range of music.<sup>21</sup> Chambers supports the above view, and further adds that in combination with the increased ability for mass distribution that the technological advancements provided in terms of the radio broadcasting and record industries, the emergence of magnetic recording tape<sup>22</sup> further facilitated the production of popular music as well.<sup>23</sup> Another important medium that allowed for further space for this new

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<sup>17</sup> Shuker, p.42

<sup>18</sup> Bloomfield, p.61

<sup>19</sup> Peterson, p. 97

<sup>20</sup> Shuker, p.40; the importance of technology for the development of popular music is explored in Paul Théberge, "'Plugged in': technology and popular music' in *The Cambridge Companion to Pop and Rock*, Simon Frith, Will Straw and John Street (eds.), (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp.3-25

<sup>21</sup> Keith Negus (.), *Popular Music in Theory*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1996), p.76

<sup>22</sup> According to Frith, by 1950 tape recording was used as the predominate recording medium; Simon Frith, 'The industrialization of popular music' in *Popular Music and Communication* 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (California: Sage Publications, 1992), p.61

<sup>23</sup> Chambers (1985), pp.14-15

musical culture to evolve was the emergence of the transistor radio which moved the music consumption from the living room to the personal space, and thus allowed young people to listen to the stations they chose to and not remain confined by the music that would please their family. Moreover, as Altschuler points out, the turn of the adults to television as their main medium of entertainment turned the attention of the radio decision-makers to music for the younger generation, initially rhythm'n'blues, and later rock'n'roll. In Altschuler's words, '[t]he kids stayed with radio throughout the '50s, as transistors replaced large, heat-generating vacuum tubes, and cheap portable radios and car radios became available'.<sup>24</sup> At the same time, further improvements made on record playing equipment created, according to Millard, 'unbreakable vinyl discs, microgrooved long-playing records and stereo sound reproduction', and provided new possibilities to record listening.<sup>25</sup> The existence of juke boxes that, according to Laing, '[w]ith the arrival of teenage rock'n'roll [...] moved into ice cream parlors, bowling alleys and skating rinks'<sup>26</sup> and more generally into public spaces where teenagers were found gave music a central role when it came to the entertainment of the teenagers and further contributed to increasing the popularity of rock'n'roll.

Chambers also stresses the fact that it was the concurrent emergence of a new market community that further contributed to the rise of rock'n'roll as the phenomenon it became. More specifically, it is generally acknowledged that the significant changes that took place in the youth culture of the 1950s, and the emergence of the 'teenager' as a social group and an important consumer community, were the factors that made the explosion of the new popular culture surrounding rock'n'roll possible.<sup>27</sup> The USA in 1950s was experiencing, according to Frith, a period of full employment and an increase in the number of teenagers; he argues that teenagers were the one group who now could support more vividly industries like cinema, radio, dance halls, and theater, since television was increasingly taking over to be the preferred family entertainment medium. The fact that it was teenagers who were more keen on spending time out of the house,

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<sup>24</sup> Altschuler, p.15

<sup>25</sup> Andre Millard, 'Gramophone' in *Continuum Encyclopedia of Popular Music of the World*, John Shepherd, David Horn, Dave Laing, Paul Oliver and Peter Wicke (eds.), v.1 (London: Continuum, 2003), pp.510-512

<sup>26</sup> Dave Laing, 'Jukebox' in *Continuum Encyclopedia of Popular Music of the World*, John Shepherd, David Horn, Dave Laing, Paul Oliver and Peter Wicke (eds.), v.1 (London: Continuum, 2003), pp.513-515

<sup>27</sup> Chambers (1985), pp.14-16

means that they now predominated public leisure spaces, and made a new teen culture, surrounded by their own style of dress and music, visible. The mainstream culture, unprepared as it was for these new developments, could not immediately reach this new market, leaving the teenagers enough space to make their own choices by drawing on material from independent record companies. By the time the majors entered, this youth culture had already been set.<sup>28</sup> However, it needs to be remembered that, as Keightley suggests, it would be a misreading of the situation to think of ‘the teen/adult split in popular music as exploding with revolutionary force in the 1950s’. As he goes on to write:

This revolutionary upheaval is usually associated with the emergence of rock’n’roll, but a more accurate account would suggest that rock’n’roll marked the culmination of a long evolution within popular music culture. From the big band era through the 1940s, there is a growing sense that the mainstream is being divided by age as well as taste. It is not until the mid-1950s that teen taste is officially institutionalized as a separate segment of the mainstream, with ‘rock’n’roll’ as the name for that taste.<sup>29</sup>

Belz argues that ‘the first artist from the Pop field to create a distinctly rock style was Bill Haley, whose ‘work demonstrated the real stylistic integration of Pop and Rhythm and Blues elements which accounted for the beginning of rock’.<sup>30</sup> According to Belz, Bill Haley and the Comets’ ‘Rock Around the Clock’ (1954) was the first rock’n’roll record to gain a number one position in the American pop charts, and it achieved a first place in the English charts as well.<sup>31</sup> The success of white rock’n’roll renditions, like those by Elvis Presley and Bill Haley, made it possible for black rock’n’roll musicians to begin being accepted and to be brought into the mainstream culture by 1957; in this way Chuck Berry, Bo Diddley, Little Richard, and Laven Baker gained a national reputation. It now became less common for white artists to cover songs that were written and performed by black artists as, according to Ford, the young audience was now mostly interested in the

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<sup>28</sup> Frith (1992), p.62

<sup>29</sup> Keightley, pp.112-13

<sup>30</sup> Belz, pp.33-4

<sup>31</sup> Ibid, p.34; As we are to see soon, this specific record played a significant role in introducing rock’n’roll to each of the five European countries we are dealing with in this study through its use in the soundtrack of the movie *Blackboard Jungle* (1955).

original versions.<sup>32</sup> Indeed, in the American context rock'n'roll became a major phenomenon from the first years of its visibility. The situation was very similar in the European context, but, as we are to see, it manifested in different ways.

Before going on to discuss how Europeans accepted and developed the rock'n'roll idiom, there remain some prominent features of the style as it first appeared that need to be stressed further. Bowen comments on some of the innovations brought to popular music with rock'n'roll, such as new styles of singing, and new rhythmic patterns. He also underlines the significance of dance as an element of the new style and as a medium that, far from being important only in terms of how the audience received the music, it can also be seen as important in terms of revealing the physical persona of the performer.<sup>33</sup> One could claim that dance and physical persona, indispensable elements of rock'n'roll, are at the same time the most important characteristics of this musical style. They can also be seen as its most revolutionary aspects, especially if one considers that the revolutionary character of rock'n'roll in strictly musical terms is no longer something that is generally accepted. Shepherd, for example, suggests that the musical structure of rock'n'roll is not as revolutionary as was initially claimed. In his words:

Certainly, there is a process of re-ordering and re-contextualization (bricolage) which results in an alteration of harmonic sequences (I, V, IV, instead of the more usual I, IV, V), and metric stress patterns (1 2 3 4 instead of 1 2 3 4) that is common to a great deal of Afro-American and Afro-American-influenced "popular" musics. Yet it would be fairer to say that while early rock's *more* even pulse (as compared to some jazz and blues on the one hand, and functional tonal music on the other) and its 'simple' chord structures allow for a strong emphasis on the temporal flow of the here and now, they at the same time constitute a largely neutral and apolitical reproduction of the harmonic-rhythmic framework derived originally from functional tonal music (Shepherd 1982) which form the musical *langue* of the industrialised world.<sup>34</sup>

A particular reading of Shepherd's argument would suggest that the most revolutionary aspect of rock'n'roll is the tension created between the physical call for participation, i.e.

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<sup>32</sup> Ford, p.461

<sup>33</sup> Meirion Bowen, 'Musical development in pop' in *Anatomy of Pop*, Tony Cash (ed.) (London: British Broadcasting Corporation, 1970), pp.32-57

<sup>34</sup> John Shepherd, 'Definition as Mystification: A Consideration of Labels as a hindrance to Understanding Significance in Music' in *Popular Music Perspectives: papers from the Second International Conference on Popular Music Studies, Reggio Emilia, September 19-24, 1983*, David Horn (ed.), (Göteborg, Exeter etc.: IASPM, 1985/ distributed by Salisbury: May & May Ltd.), p.91

dancing, and the adjustment of the new musical idioms to ones that could more easily be accepted and promoted by the mainstream culture; this I consider an important distinction, since rock'n'roll made a revolutionary impact on the popular music scene, while always remaining tightly connected to the more acceptable mainstream musical structures. And the key element for this was initially, and largely remained subsequently, its link with the corporeal, through the emphasis on the physical persona of the lead singer and on rhythm and 'beat' as the dance; again quoting Shepherd, '[t]he crucial and more obvious tension within rock'n'roll would seem to come between the harmonic-rhythmic framework (itself containing tension) and the strong, masculine personalities revealed through the vocal lines'.<sup>35</sup> Whereas this kind of argument is to be seen in the light of the very first years of the popularity of rock'n'roll, it touches on those elements of rock'n'roll that have been crucial in defining its character, as well, indeed, as those that might be regarded as of less importance. Peter Cole, for instance, comments on the 'unimportance' of the lyrics in the first rock'n'roll songs; he draws on songs like Elvis' 'All Shook Up' (1957) and some of the Beatles' early songs in order to demonstrate that the absence of any important lyrical content was in fact an essential characteristic of the new music that served to stress the emphasis on the beat of the songs and reinforce the rhythm (although this was a feature that would soon change when new developments affected rock music in the course of the 1960s).<sup>36</sup>

Of course, the lyrical content of the songs was of little importance during the first years of rock'n'roll in France, Germany, Greece, and Italy, due to the linguistic limitations the listeners faced initially with English-language lyrics; this is partly why at first the idiom was taken further by British artists who shared a common language with the USA. The reasonable outcome of this is that within the other countries that are the focus of this study it was mainly the overall *sound* and the *rhythm* of the songs that captured the attention of young people. To many, rock'n'roll was a musical style to dance to, but this new style of dancing would at the same time create tension and anxiety for many adult listeners, where the music and dance were seen as 'primitive', sexually provocative and morally degenerate. Interestingly enough, as Bennett also suggests, by

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid, p.92

<sup>36</sup> Peter Cole, 'Lyrics in Pop' in *Anatomy of Pop*, Tony Cash (ed.) (London: British Broadcasting Corporation, 1970), pp.9-31

the time of its dissemination in Europe, rock'n'roll had already been transformed into a 'cleaner' version of its original style, and its 'rough edges' had been refined in the USA by the mid-1950s when it became widely popular among American youth.<sup>37</sup> Nevertheless, in spite of having been 'cleaned up', it still hit Europe as a provocative, even scandalous music because of its physical appeal, and it is precisely for this reason that the physical act of dancing is an important element that cannot and should not be excluded from any discussion of rock'n'roll. As Chambers writes:

[d]ancing, where the explicit and implicit zones of socialized pleasures and individual desires entwine in the momentary rediscovery of the 'reason of the body' (Nietzsche), is undoubtedly one of the main avenues along which pop's 'sense' travels. Suspended over the predictable rhythms of the everyday, to dance often involves loaded steps, a pattern of obliquely registered tensions. These represent not only the contradictory pulls between work and pleasure, but also between a commonsensical view of pleasure ('letting off steam', 'a well-earned break', 'enjoying yourself') and a deeper, internalised moment where a serious self-realization – sexual and social, private and public – is being pursued.<sup>38</sup>

Bradley also places emphasis on the importance of dancing, showing how it can also be interpreted as a form of 'resistance' by young people to the norms of parental authority.<sup>39</sup> But while dance might well constitute a major characteristic of rock'n'roll that might appear to stem as a natural result from its overriding rhythmic features that to many symbolize sexuality and primitivism and is supposed to be derived from the black culture, this can be a misleading view. As Mpozinis argues, apart from the fact that the rhythm of rock'n'roll is not derived exclusively from black culture, even if it was, sexuality is not as permanent in the black cultural tradition as it is often believed to be.<sup>40</sup> Writing on the importance of dance in the African heritage, Hanna stresses the fact that scholars from disciplines as varied as history, anthropology, and philosophy have identified the connection between dance and 'social, cultural, political, economic, and ethical life' in the African heritage, while psychological and interdisciplinary approaches have pointed

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<sup>37</sup> Andy Bennett, *Cultures of Popular Music* (Berkshire: Open University Press, 2001), p.12

<sup>38</sup> Chambers (1985), p.17

<sup>39</sup> Bradley, pp.114-118

<sup>40</sup> Mpozinis, p.104

out the significant position of dance in the lives of African-Americans as well.<sup>41</sup> Dancing is a central element in every aspect of African culture and the view that certain african-american dances were to be seen as linked to sexuality could be interpreted as an attempt to underestimate african-american culture and present it as a moral threat. Mpozinis argues that the rhythm of rock'n'roll is also very important in terms of its revolutionary aspect, that is, in the way it shows the body to be a medium of musical experience, and how through it the youth culture has unconsciously worked against the predominately protestant morality in the USA and the conservatism of both American and European societies as a whole at that time.<sup>42</sup> Nevertheless, as we are to see in later chapters, the connection between rock'n'roll, dance, and black sexuality would be one of the most persistent arguments employed by the official culture in each of the European countries to be considered here in order to oppose the spread of rock'n'roll within their borders. As we are to see later, another way in which Britain, France, Germany, Greece, and Italy attempted to downplay the effect of rock'n'roll within their borders after its initial reception was to emphasize and bring to the fore the musical styles that were considered to be their 'national' popular music styles. The section that follows discusses which popular music styles that existed before rock'n'roll and alongside rock'n'roll were considered to be the representative styles for each of these five countries, and therefore gives an indication of the musical context in which rock'n'roll landed in the mid-1950s.

### **'...I don't belong here...': national popular musics before and alongside rock'n'roll**

None of the places where rock'n'roll landed should be thought of as a void waiting to be filled. The case was in fact quite the contrary: each of these countries had already existing popular music traditions of their own, within and against which rock'n'roll had to accommodate itself. As we are to see in this section, in some cases the existing national popular music idioms were held in such esteem that any foreign musical idiom could not be easily accepted. In these contexts rock'n'roll could not easily find a place for itself, and this depended primarily on the extent to which each country considered their culture

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<sup>41</sup> Judith Lynne Hanna, 'Moving messages: identity and desire in popular music and social dance' in *Popular Music and Communication*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., James Lull (ed.), (London: Sage Publications, 1992), pp.182-83

<sup>42</sup> Mpozinis, p.104

to be important and authentic. The most notable example of such an attitude among the countries this study is dealing with is France. This should not be surprising, considering the persistence in France for what Looseley describes as ‘cultural exceptionalism’<sup>43</sup> and also its already strong popular music tradition, expressed mostly through the style of the *chanson*,<sup>44</sup> which was regarded as an authentic French idiom.<sup>45</sup> As Tinker suggests, the French *chanson* tradition dates back to the era of the troubadours, and is most characteristically personified by such artists like Maurice Chevalier, Charles Trenet and Édith Piaf.<sup>46</sup> Rock’n’roll music and the styles generated from it, being an imported (and, thus, in a sense, inauthentic) popular music style could not easily be accepted and legitimized in France, where the popular music scene was dominated not only by a musical style that was ‘untouched’ as the nationally authentic form, the *chanson*, but also other indigenous styles of popular music like the *variétés*.<sup>47</sup>

Italy is also a country with an important musical heritage, most significantly connected to its strong opera tradition, the elements of which are carried over the years in Italian popular music and are considered to be the main characteristic of pure Italian music. Arias and romanzas from operas and operettas are carried in the *modern canzone* to create a continuity of the long Italian music tradition – which, as Prato observes, existed far before the Italian nation itself.<sup>48</sup> Nonetheless, apart from these melodramatic elements, Italy also has specific song styles that are characteristic of the nation. As Prato suggests, Italy’s first national repertoire of popular music are the military war chants that flourished between the years of Risorgimento (Italian unification during the 19<sup>th</sup> century) and the First World War. These included songs composed by amateurs or taken from different areas of the country and transformed into Italian songs – even if in some cases

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<sup>43</sup> Looseley (1), p.38

<sup>44</sup> For a more detailed account of the ‘authenticity’ of the *chanson*, see Looseley (2), pp.63-86; further information on the *chanson* tradition can also be found in David Looseley (1), ‘In from the margins: *chanson*, pop and cultural legitimacy’ in *Popular Music in France from Chanson to Techno*, Hugh Dauncey and Steve Cannon (eds.) (Hants: Ashgate Publishing, 2003), pp.27-39

<sup>45</sup> Looseley (2), p.84

<sup>46</sup> Chris Tinker, ‘Music’ in *French Popular Culture: An Introduction*, Hugh Dauncey (ed.) (London: Arnold, 2003), p.92

<sup>47</sup> Looseley (2), p.25

<sup>48</sup> Paolo Prato, ‘Italy’ in the *Continuum Encyclopedia of Popular Music of the World*, vol. VII, Shepherd, John, Horn, David, and Laign, Dave (eds.) (London: Continuum, 2005), p.222



their original dialect was kept – and were intended not as creations of high artistic value but to raise the morale of those far from home.<sup>49</sup> When it comes to urban culture, Italian urban centres had developed song cultures through theater and club scenes.<sup>50</sup> Among these, of a distinctive significance is Naples, a notably powerful music centre at the turn of the twentieth century. Here is where *café-chantants* and music halls established, in Prato's words, the 'foundations for what have long become the most accepted singing styles of the country'.<sup>51</sup> Over the years, and combining the historical development of all the above traits, the authentic national Italian popular music became that of the *canzone d'autore*.<sup>52</sup>

Germany, on the other hand, had always had an important classical music tradition as opposed to popular music tradition. However, there were also significant cultural influences on the country from beyond its modern borders,<sup>53</sup> due to factors such as its central position in Europe as well as migration groups such as the Balkan Gypsies, immigrant European Jews, and French protestants.<sup>54</sup> As Wicke suggests, the first form of popular songs that 'became an early record of a national form of German popular music' were the 'anti-feudal and anti-clerical political songs' that sprang out of the bourgeois movement to unite Germany in the mid-nineteenth century.<sup>55</sup> Nevertheless, the main German popular music style became the commercial *Schlager* that was established by the late 19<sup>th</sup> century 'as the first German musical genre of national importance'.<sup>56</sup> *Schlager*'s roots are found in the Viennese operetta and dance traditions of the nineteenth century. It also carries folk-like characteristics, while later it became influenced by military music and marches. *Schlager* were highly popular in the 1920s and 1930s as well as after World

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<sup>49</sup> Ibid

<sup>50</sup> Ibid

<sup>51</sup> Ibid

<sup>52</sup> Goffredo Plastino and Marco Santoro, 'Introduction: the Italian way(s). A special issue on Italian popular music' in *Popular Music*, 26/3 (2007), p.386; According to Alessandro Carrera, the beginning of the 'canzone d'autore' can be seen in the late 1950s Turin movement of *Cantacronache*, which was highly political (as seen in 'Folk and popular song from the nineteenth century to the 1990s' in *The Cambridge Companion to Modern Italian Culture*, Zygmunt G. Barański, and Rebecca J. West (eds.), (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p.330

<sup>53</sup> Many of these influences had arrived earlier via the Austro-Hungarian Empire, seen in the context of the larger German language community.

<sup>54</sup> Peter Wicke, 'Germany' in the *Continuum Encyclopedia of Popular Music of the World*, vol. VII, Shepherd, John, Horn, David, and Laign, Dave (eds.) (London: Continuum, 2005), p.187

<sup>55</sup> Ibid, p.188

<sup>56</sup> Ibid

War II. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, according to Wicke, an important German popular music tradition was developed via theatre – the revue where songs ‘that could become *Schlager*’ were produced; this tradition continued into the early 1930s with music for movie soundtracks – Marlene Dietrich is one of the most representative singers of this type of song.<sup>57</sup> One of the origins of this style of song also goes back to the Weimar Republic and *Kabarett*. Another popular music genre, *volkstümliche*, a commercialized version of German folk music related to the *Heimat* movies, also became popular in the post-war years.<sup>58</sup> Songs of the *volkstümliche* genre, according to Larkey, carry the melodic characteristics of German *Volksmusik*, as well as the instrumentation (accordion, clarinet, woodwinds) and the singing styles of it, but are not considered representative of the German folk music, since they are a commercialized version of it, inauthentic, and uncritical.<sup>59</sup> All of these musical traits would be used by both West and East Germans after the war as means through which they could define their identity, their Germanness. One could imagine that Germany, due to the position in which it found itself after the war, and because of the strong sense of national guilt, felt a certain vulnerability when it came to cultural influence. The need to define Germanness was evident in both of the German states and, as Larkey suggests drawing also on Frith, this is also reflected in the way popular music was treated within German borders, both before as well as after the reception of rock’n’roll.<sup>60</sup> As is to be seen, Germany also developed later its own group of singer-songwriters with a distinctly political edge (*Liedermacher*), the most famous of which was Wolf Biermann, whose music was influential in both East Germany and West Germany.

Greece has a somewhat different situation than the rest of the countries this dissertation is dealing with, since its popular music was already a cosmopolitan mixture of a variety of influences from Asia Minor, Turkey, Italy, and Western music among others.<sup>61</sup> Since the late nineteenth century, due to the emergence of urban life in Greece, a notable Greek popular music began to emerge; this had always been influenced by

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<sup>57</sup> Ibid, p.189

<sup>58</sup> Larkey (2000), pp.1-2

<sup>59</sup> Ibid, p.2

<sup>60</sup> Larkey (2002), p.234

<sup>61</sup> Shepherd, John, Horn, David, and Laing, Dave (eds.), *Continuum Encyclopedia of Popular Music of the World*, v.VII: Europe, (London: Continuum, 2005)

Eastern and Western elements. One of the early styles is the *smyrnéika*, music made mainly with instruments capable of producing micro-intervals in combination with guitars, mandolins and accordions played in *café amáns*, the popularity of which increased during the population exchanges after the Greco-Turkish war had ended in 1923.<sup>62</sup> Around the 1930s, a mixture of Greek rhythms with Western features (melody, harmony, instrumentation, performance), gave birth to the *archontorebetika*.<sup>63</sup> According to Pennanen, the *smyrneika*'s heyday would be subsided in the mid-1930s due to the increasing popularity of Peiraias-style *rebétika*. Rebetika, with its main instruments the *bouzouki*, *baglamas*, and *guitar*, is one of the most characteristic features – if not the single most characteristic – of Greek popular music.<sup>64</sup> In addition, from the mid-1950s onwards, the popular music style *laiko* (commercial Greek song style that carried elements from rebetika, Western Europe, North America, Turkish and Egyptian popular music and Indian film music as well, played with large amplified orchestras in nightclubs), emerged in Greece.<sup>65</sup> *Laiko* would thereafter become the most prominent style of Greek popular music and would remain so for several decades. In addition, like in the rest of the countries discussed here, a tradition of singers-songwriters also arose in Greece from a point onwards, and became considered representative of an 'authentic' and 'serious' Greek popular music.

Finally, British music has always had links with ballad singing, a tradition of brass bands, big band music and the songs of the music halls and variety shows.<sup>66</sup> However, Britain has less in common with the kinds of situations discussed in relation to the above countries in the sense that its national popular music is harder to define since it has always been, as Tunstall observes, heavily influenced by the American Tin Pan Alley tradition from the 1890s onwards. As Tunstall writes, '[m]any famous "traditional" music-hall English songs are in fact of American origin'.<sup>67</sup> Chambers writes that British

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<sup>62</sup> Risto Pekka Pennanen, 'Greece' in *The Continuum Encyclopedia of Popular Music of the World*, v.7, John Shepherd, David Horn, Dave Laing (eds.), (New York: Continuum, 2005), p.115

<sup>63</sup> Ibid, p.114

<sup>64</sup> Ibid, p.115

<sup>65</sup> Ibid

<sup>66</sup> For a detailed account of British popular music before rock'n'roll, see Dave Laing, 'United Kingdom' in *The Continuum Encyclopedia of Popular Music of the World*, v.7, John Shepherd, David Horn, Dave Laing (eds.), (New York: Continuum, 2005), pp.326-327

<sup>67</sup> Jeremy Tunstall, *The Media are American: Anglo-American Media in the World* (London: Constable, 1977), p.130

music before rock'n'roll was dominated by music from show business to light jazz, mostly music of the 'crooners'. British singers like Dickie Valentine, Joan Regan, and Denis Lotus sang cover versions of American successes. So, as the writer suggests, rock'n'roll was not the first sign of America's influence on Britain. But, as he argues, rock'n'roll represented an 'other America', an America that had not been introduced to Britain until then.<sup>68</sup> Bradley, in fact, comments on how rock'n'roll had a huge appeal to British youth due to the fact that at the time of its reception it came as a stark contrast with the then-prevailing popular music idiom, even of dance music, which was heard in the work of musicians such as Eddie Calvert and The Ted Heath Orchestra.<sup>69</sup>

As is to be expected, each of these countries had its own popular music, which again was not homogeneous and did not consist of a single musical style; at the same time it was nevertheless characteristic for each of these places and for the general population of this period. In addition to the specific music styles of these countries, there was also, as discussed in the previous chapter, a developing jazz tradition which was again influencing their already existent popular music scenes. Indeed, British, French, German, Greek, and Italian audiences had been exposed to african-american musical idioms through their interaction with jazz music long before rock'n'roll made its appearance. However, it can be argued that jazz music never became fully assimilated as a popular music idiom in the vernacular of any country; it rather followed a completely different path and could even, with the benefit of hindsight, be seen to have been transformed into an elitist musical culture of its own. As Wicke notes, there was a functional difference between rock'n'roll and jazz in the lives of teenagers at this time; as he explains, through the enjoyment of jazz, a musical style that was produced by adults for adults, teenagers derived a delight in 'already being an adult'. Rock'n'roll, on the other hand, was a product of the combination of the teenagers' self-awareness and post-war realization on the part of teenagers of their new purchasing power.<sup>70</sup> Put otherwise, whereas jazz has always been a musical style that mainly concerned the adult world, rock'n'roll was about to create a musical world for the younger generation of the late

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<sup>68</sup> Chambers (1985), p.18

<sup>69</sup> Bradley, p.55

<sup>70</sup> Peter Wicke, *Rock Music: Culture, Aesthetics and Sociology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p.34

1950s and the 1960s.<sup>71</sup> Besides, as Wicke also suggests, unlike jazz which was taken up by white artists and was taken away from its black roots to better fit European tastes, rock'n'roll had a different treatment, in the sense that white appropriators (Elvis, Bill Haley etc.) copied african-american music as closely possible.<sup>72</sup>

As will be made clear in the course of this dissertation, when rock'n'roll entered the musical contexts discussed above it affected them in notable ways. One could see the reception of rock'n'roll by Europeans as the beginning of a new musical universe – with all its social implications. Indeed, on its first appearance in these five European countries rock'n'roll was treated with hostility by adults and the official cultural representatives, mainly due to what was perceived as its provocative, sexual and 'primitive' character. However, the african-american influences on rock'n'roll and its highly energetic and sexual character are not the only reasons for the attacks it initially attracted from the established European 'grownup' societies; rather, one could argue, the initial response of these countries during the period rock'n'roll was making its appearance in Europe somehow carries political undertones. In this sense it has to be taken as a response from European countries towards what was perceived as the threat presented by yet another American cultural product, an attitude towards 'Americanization' which had already had the experience of Hollywood and the influence of the American movie. The image of America, as Pells argues, has always had a double meaning for Europe. Ever since the nineteenth century, America was for the aristocratic classes and the wealthy of Europe the representation of a threat that could affect 'tradition, culture, privilege, and social position', while for the poorer masses of Europeans, America represented a dreamlike, promised land where people could find better lives and advancement.<sup>73</sup> For the period with which this dissertation is concerned, we find America – in the sense of its popular music – again dividing Europe, but this time the division takes place between teenagers and their parents. While young people in Europe saw rock'n'roll as a form of revolution and an expression of their youth, older people saw it mostly as a moral threat and the danger of alienation of their children from their traditional values. The reception and

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<sup>71</sup> Ibid, p.34

<sup>72</sup> Ibid, p.16

<sup>73</sup> Richard H. Pells, *Not Like Us: how Europeans have loved, hated, and transformed American culture since World War II* (New York: Basic Books, 1997), p.5

following development of rock'n'roll by the young (mainly) and the social discontent this caused is generally expressed differently in each of the countries on which I am focusing. This is mostly due to the fact that in the mid-1950s, when rock'n'roll appeared and started 'intruding' into Europe, Britain, France, Germany, Greece, and Italy found themselves in different economic, political, and social circumstances (although there were also similarities in many respects). If this is combined with the degree of cultural distance each country appeared to have from America at the moment of the reception of rock'n'roll, the discontinuities between them during their first 'encounter' with the 'alien' idiom could reveal interesting insights. This will be the main focus of Part II of this dissertation. More immediately, however, we need to consider the politics of popular music and more specifically of rock'n'roll.

## 2. Conceptual context

### '...everything's political': popular music and politics

In the previous section we had a glimpse of the politics of music, both when it comes to what rock'n'roll represents for various groups, but also in terms of the possibility that this representation has more to do with rock'n'roll as an American cultural product and less as a musical style. The political connotations that surround the music are not restricted to these two possibilities, however, and cannot possibly be dealt with here all at once. As Ullestad wrote,

All pop is political. Even the most avowedly non-political work of art has political implications in its conception, its expression (production), exhibition (distribution), and reception (enjoyment/consumption). And, self-conscious political activism isn't limited to speeches, meetings, or voting. Cultural and social activities of diverse origins and expressions produce distinct effects.<sup>74</sup>

A similar point is made by Street who expresses the view that the boundaries between politics and music are 'illusionary', in the sense that music '*embodies* political values and experiences, and *organizes* our response to society as political thought of action'; he goes on to add that 'music does not just provide a vehicle of political expression, it *is* that

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<sup>74</sup> Neal Ullestad, 'Diverse Rock Rebellions Subvert Mass Media Hegemony' in *Rockin' the Boat: Mass Music and Mass Movements*, Garofalo, Reebee (ed.), (Boston: South End Press, 1992), p.41

expression'.<sup>75</sup> Although this might seem an overstatement of music's political power, its truthfulness is exemplified by the music's political power as such, as well as by the use of the audience, and also by the acts of nation-states in response to music. Of course, Street does not simply present this argument; he problematizes it and gives very useful insights into its treatment in the book *Music and Politics*. For example, Street suggests that we should overcome the tendency to oversimplify music's political power with statements that propose that everything is political, since such claims risk depriving politics of actions that can have a political impact as such. In his words, such a claim 'does not distinguish those activities that can affect the exercise of public power from those that cannot'.<sup>76</sup> Along these lines, Poiger defines as political 'all actions designed to effect larger social changes'.<sup>77</sup>

One of the arguments used by Street to make the point that not all music can be political is the view, expressed by Colin Hay, that for music to be political, it has to be social, not affecting only the individual.<sup>78</sup> Indeed, the role of music within society and its function as a social form is what creates the space for one to speak about music's political power. This creates the ironic contrast with the fundamental perceptions of popular music, as seen in the work of the Frankfurt School. Garofalo brings this contradiction to the fore when he comments on Marx and the Frankfurt School's position towards culture and popular music. As he points out, interpretations of the former posit culture as part of the 'superstructure' and, thus, as 'reflective' of the ideas 'favorable to the ruling class'; the latter considers popular music to be the trivial and inauthentic product of a commercial industry, enjoyed by passive listeners. Whereas both of these positions appear to dismiss popular music's ability to express political activity and social transformation,<sup>79</sup> the subsequent history of popular music has shown that this cannot stand as a valid conclusion. The dismissal of popular music in these terms is shown most

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<sup>75</sup> John Street, *Music and Politics* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2012), p.1

<sup>76</sup> Ibid, p.6

<sup>77</sup> Uta G. Poiger, 'Rock'n'Roll, Female Sexuality, and the Cold War Battle over German Identities' in *West Germany Under Construction: Politics, Society and Culture in the Adenauer era*, Robert G. Moeller (Michigan: The University of Michigan Press, 1998), p.395

<sup>78</sup> Street (2012), p.8

<sup>79</sup> Reebee Garofalo (s), 'Understanding Mega-Events: If We Are the World, Then How Do We Change It?' in *Rockin' the Boat: Mass Music and Mass Movements*, Garofalo, Reebee (ed.), (Boston: South End Press, 1992), p.17

prominently in the work of Adorno.<sup>80</sup> Paddison provides a comprehensive critique of Adorno's position, both by reminding us the historical and musical context in which Adorno's writings on popular music appeared (1920s, 1930s and 1940s), while also by referring to Adorno's own methodologies in the light of which his extreme positions should be read; having set the framework, Paddison then goes on to show how popular music can be discussed as a potentially radical and critical practice in relation to politics even through the use of Adorno's own views.<sup>81</sup>

Nevertheless, the term 'political' in relation to popular music can be interpreted in a number of different ways. Firstly it can be seen as political messages intentionally included within a song by the songwriter for the expression of her own political ideals. Secondly, it can be seen as the attribution of political readings to and the political usage of songs that are not originally created by the artists as to evoke these kinds of sentiments. A third way to read popular music as 'political' is to observe its relation towards the nation-state policies on popular culture, how it aligns and distances itself from the particular regulations each country's government applies as part of its cultural policies, and how, thus, music defines itself as part of a political environment. This in particular is the most important political use of music that this dissertation will be drawing on. The central idea behind this, is that the position a certain musical style might be found in after it has been regulated by the central nation-state also presents its acceptability in terms of broadcasting, production, and consumption. In this sense, the consumption of a musical style that might be seen as innocuous in a certain country, it might be seen as revolutionary in another, if in the latter the musical style has been banned. It is therefore in the space created between the nation-state policies and the musical activities of the people that the political power of music is defined, even if unintentional. This could be seen as supported by Negus' comment on the notion of political uses of music. Drawing on Grossberg, Negus writes that

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<sup>80</sup> Theodor W. Adorno (with the assistance of George Simpson), 'On Popular Music' in *Essays on Music*, selected, with introduction, commentary and notes by Richard Leppert, Susan H. Gillespie (transl.), (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), pp.437-469

<sup>81</sup> Max Paddison, 'The critique criticized: Adorno and Popular Music' in *Popular Music 2: Theory and Method* (1982), pp.201-218



music works at the intersection of the body and emotions, generating affective alliances between people that in turn create the energy for social change. Such affective alliances do not operate according to liberal bourgeois democratic political theory, nor do they correspond to the rationale of conventional political movements. But the affective empowerment that is generated does provide the potential for optimism and social change.<sup>82</sup>

Indeed, music can be an empowering medium to carry aspirations for social change. As Street writes, '[m]usic has long been a site of resistance. From the folk songs of rural England to the work songs of slaves, from anti-war protest songs to illegal raves, music has given voice to resistance and opposition'.<sup>83</sup> Its political importance, though, can be more clearly seen in the way it is sometimes treated by the state and the official culture. The need to see music as a form to be treated and regulated for its social and political meaning is something as old as Plato. This has been carried through centuries, and, even today (although many writers have argued for the contrary), the nation-state policies acquire an uncontested importance regarding popular music consumption, something that is in itself a significant indication when it comes to music's political power. Music has been used by nation-states in different ways: national anthem to be the most obvious, music has been employed in many cases during electoral campaigns, and has also been used as propaganda in regimes such as Stalinism and Nazism. The most prevalent relationship between music and nation-state remains, of course, censorship, or the employment of decisions concerning which types of music are going to be state-funded. As Negus argues, the action of banning different styles of music exemplified by different regimes, like Stalin's USSR, Nazi Germany, and Pinochet's Chile, can be seen as a direct recognition of the political power of music, power which was recognized as early as Plato's time.<sup>84</sup> However, as Street argues,

The arguments – about whether a particular piece of popular culture is suitable for public consumption – are not just about matters of 'taste' or about viewing figures or opinion polls. They are founded on judgments about what is to be admired or decried in popular culture, and they emerge from the different ways

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<sup>82</sup> Keith Negus (2), 'Globalization and the Music of the Public Spheres' in *Globalization, Communication and Transnational Civil Society*, Braman, Sandra and Sreberny-Mohammadi, Annabelle (eds.), (New Jersey: Hampton Press, 1996), p.189

<sup>83</sup> John Street, "'Fight the Power": The Politics of Music and the Music of Politics' in *Government and Opposition*, 38/1, (January, 2003), p.120

<sup>84</sup> Negus (2) (1996), p.189

(and the different contexts) in which popular culture works. All of the arguments are the product of competing ideologies and competing interests, and their consequences are measured in the opportunities people have to engage with culture (and to benefit or suffer from it).<sup>85</sup>

Wicke writes: 'Music is a medium which is able to convey meaning and values which – even (or, perhaps, particularly) if hidden within the indecipherable world of sound – can shape patterns of behaviour imperceptibly over time until they become the visible background of real political activity.'<sup>86</sup> This does not necessarily mean that the creator of any given musical (or cultural) work intentionally inserted political messages in her text. In Rosenthal words, 'if we have learned anything at all from postmodernism, it is that the product as created by the producer is unlikely to be the product as received or used by the audience'.<sup>87</sup> Rock music, which is the focal concern in this dissertation, has always been a musical style surrounded by political connotations. Wicke writes that the political power of rock lies in its musical appearance, and the appeal to the senses; it is not necessary that it carried overtly political lyrics. In his words, '[t]he political effectiveness of rock was supposed to be on a different plane, less easily grasped and therefore less easily controlled'.<sup>88</sup>

Street, in arguing that not all popular culture texts might be interpreted as politically meaningful highlights the fact that not all popular culture products are of the same quality, and, instead, that we have to understand a popular culture product, apart from observing its text, its producer and its receiver, by understanding the context in which it has been created in terms of institutions and political ideologies, in order to be able to comment on its possible political power.<sup>89</sup> This stance could be further strengthened by Bennett's remark that '[a] cultural practice does not carry its politics with it, as if written upon its brow ever and a day; rather, its political functioning depends on the network of social and ideological relations in which it is inscribed as a consequence of the ways in which, in a particular conjuncture, it is articulated to other

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<sup>85</sup> John Street, *Politics and Popular Culture*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1997), p.21

<sup>86</sup> Wicke (1992), p.81

<sup>87</sup> Rob Rosenthal, 'Serving the Movement: The Role(s) of Music' in *Popular Music and Society*, 25/3-4, (2001), p.15

<sup>88</sup> Wicke (1990), p.103

<sup>89</sup> Street (1997), p.19

practices'.<sup>90</sup> Thus, popular culture in general and music in particular are not to be considered separately from their context, and their political message must not be seen as something to be read in their obvious content, but is always to be cross-referenced with the context within which it has been created, but also within which it is being consumed, and always as something of constant change; the political message ascribed to a song in the 1960s might create completely different political readings in the 2010s.

Returning to the context of this dissertation, it is of a vital importance to understand the political character of music; as is to be seen in the following chapters, in many cases rock music will be treated in the context of its political significance. This is true both of its use by its listeners as a sign of resistance (both intentionally and unintentionally), and also of the imposition of censorship and quotas by the state when it came to its broadcasting. Indeed, as was suggested in here, the perspectives on music's politics are more than one; although popular music's political use can manifest in various ways, most of which will be touched upon in the following chapters, it is the case that it is the political relationship with the nation-state that I am mostly drawing on. It is the treatment of the music by the nation-state that shows the music's position in each country as a product of the broadcasting networks and also of the national music industries, while at the same time this creates the context for understanding the ways in which the production and consumption of music can often translate as a sign of resistance. All in all, one could argue that the assimilation of rock musical idioms in the contexts of particular European countries is in itself a political action, one surrounded by complex processes involving musicians, audiences, nation-states, music industries, and international relations. Besides, rock'n'roll can be seen to have been ascribed an indirect political status immediately after its first appearance in Britain, France, Germany, Greece, and Italy; this is to be seen mainly in the way it was initially treated by the 'grownup societies' and the 'moral panics' evoked by its popularity with the youth cultures of these countries. Indeed, this foreign musical idiom, and American popular culture in general, was in many cases regarded by the adults and the official culture as morally dangerous and incompatible with the character and values of the indigenous

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<sup>90</sup> Tony Bennett (i), 'Introduction: popular culture and "the turn to Gramsci" in *Popular Culture and Social Relations*, Tony Bennett, Colin Mercer and Janet Woollacott (eds.), (Milton Keynes: Open University Press, 1986), p.xvi

cultures. This attitude can be discussed in the light of the debates concerning American cultural imperialism, or Americanization.

**‘We’re all living in America, Amerika is wunderbar’: Americanization; cultural imperialism or democratic modernization?**

It is generally agreed that the interwar years and the years after WWII are the years of American domination. Nonetheless, as Fehrenbach and Poiger point out, a process of Americanization was not something new. In their words,

While American culture’s appearance abroad predated the era of aggressive expansion by American business interests into international markets, cultural importation and interaction intensified in the late nineteenth century and became the object of sustained official, business, and public concern by the second decade of this century. Thus, Americanization cannot be understood outside of the rise of modern nation-states, consumer capitalism, and mass culture.<sup>91</sup>

As the dominant power of the world after WWII, the USA made its presence felt not only by providing economic aid to nations over the world, but by having sailors stationed in many countries as well. The American presence in military and economic support was mainly a direct political issue, since the USA could not allow the collapse of Europe, while also could not allow the USSR to dominate Europe. It was also a cultural issue, since the informal influence of USA was felt in that they dominated Europe with their popular culture. As Fehrenbach and Poiger put it, ‘[i]nitially, then, the American cultural impact was experienced – and in fact bureaucratically organized – as a complement to the more overtly political policies of the American military governments’.<sup>92</sup> This can be further extended in the commercial interests that such a cultural influence can serve, since, as Fehrenbach and Poiger go on to argue, many saw this as a ‘stunningly successful symbiotic relationship’ of American policies and American business abroad that ‘advocates for national protectionism’ saw as a possible threat for ‘cultural traditions,

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<sup>91</sup> Heide Fehrenbach and Uta G. Poiger, ‘Introduction: Americanization reconsidered’ in *Transactions, Transgressions, Transformations: American Culture in Western Europe and Japan*, Heide Fehrenbach and Uta G. Poiger (eds.), (New York: Berghahn Books, 2000), p.xviii

<sup>92</sup> Ibid, p.xix

economic health, and political sovereignty of affected nations'.<sup>93</sup> This recognition not only created fears of 'Americanization' within nations that had been seriously weakened economically by the end of the war, but also gave rise to a false myth that gave a bigger gravity to the issue: nations were scared of being Americanized, in every sense of the word, concerned that the period of economic dependence in the immediate post-war years might continue for a long and indefinite period. Preconceptions against Americanization had grown bigger, and although terms like American and cultural imperialism as such only became current, according to Elteren, in 1970s and 1980s in political and theoretical discourse, expressions of concern about the danger of the possible homogenizing effect that the Western culture and US Imperialism in particular might have on the world date back to the post-war period.<sup>94</sup> The cultural imperialism thesis, however, had a short life-span, since, as Elteren points out, from the beginning of the 1980s, it would begin being substituted in academic writing with the term 'cultural globalisation'.<sup>95</sup> Nevertheless, during the mid-1950s, what was happening in the context we are observing could be easily misconceived as to be 'cultural', or, 'American', imperialism.

It is difficult to argue that American influence at this time was something unprecedented: for example, Adorno draws parallels between the influence of Wagner on the music of other countries in the second half of the nineteenth century with the power that America 'exercised' over the world market during the twentieth century, something that he sees as more than 'mere coincidence'.<sup>96</sup> Nonetheless, American influence was certainly more powerful than the influence of Wagner or of any other preceding examples. It can hardly be contested that what intensified and made American influence much more powerful in these terms were the developments in technology that further facilitated the international transmission of the products of American mass culture. From this perspective, Americanization, or cultural imperialism is more often than not seen in the light of technological development and, more specifically, the development of the mass media. This is also supported by Tomlinson, who discusses cultural imperialism in

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<sup>93</sup> Ibid

<sup>94</sup> Mel van Elteren, 'U.S. Cultural imperialism today: only a chimera?' in *SAIS Review*, 23/2 (Summer-Fall 2003), p.170

<sup>95</sup> Ibid, p.171

<sup>96</sup> Theodor W. Adorno, *Introduction to the Sociology of Music*, E. B. Ashton (trans.), (New York: The Continuum Publishing Company, 1989), p.167

terms of ‘media imperialism’, ‘discourse of nationality’, ‘critique of global capitalism’, and ‘critique of modernity’.<sup>97</sup> In his discussion of cultural imperialism as media imperialism Tomlinson speaks of the unchallenged position that media consumption has held in our lives for the past several decades. However, he draws our attention to the fact that media consumption is not by any means to be seen either as the single unique activity that a person might occupy herself with in her everyday life, or as an activity which takes place in isolation separated from any other experience. In his words: ‘[t]o understand claims about cultural imperialism we need to examine the relationship of the media to other aspects of culture without assuming its “centrality” from the outset’.<sup>98</sup> Tomlinson sees media consumption as ‘a *subtle interplay of mediations*’ where the media can be seen to be ‘the dominant *representational* aspect of modern culture’; in this sense, one’s interpretation of media products informs and is informed by her own life experiences,<sup>99</sup> and can never be seen as ‘predetermined’. Thus, as Tomlinson argues, the media should be seen to be ‘*mediating*’ and not ‘*determining*’ ‘cultural experience’.<sup>100</sup> This comes as a response to the views that make clear connections between the idea of cultural imperialism and the practices of capitalism: the calculated attempts of the system to manipulate the passive consumption of popular-cultural products by the audience, ideas that emerged largely in the writings of the Frankfurt School. However, as Tomlinson puts it: ‘their [the Frankfurt School’s] position rests on the problematic notion of the “false consciousness” of the masses and the manipulative power of the media, as Horkheimer and Adorno put it in a much-cited article, “The Culture Industry”’.<sup>101</sup>

American cultural dominance during the post-war years happened because of what Pells calls ‘unique but temporary political and economic circumstances’.<sup>102</sup> As put by Tomlinson, this was a time of ‘the self-satisfaction of an affluent 1950s America which produced the global developmental agenda of “modernization theory”’.<sup>103</sup> It

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<sup>97</sup> John Tomlinson, *Cultural Imperialism: A Critical Introduction* (London: Continuum, 1991)

<sup>98</sup> Ibid, p.23

<sup>99</sup> Ibid, p.61

<sup>100</sup> Ibid, p.63

<sup>101</sup> Ibid, p.126

<sup>102</sup> Richard Pells, ‘American Culture abroad: The European experience since 1945’ in *Cultural Transmissions and Receptions: American Mass Culture in Europe*, Rob Kroes, Robert W. Rydelt, Doeko F.J. Bosscher (eds.) (Amsterdam: VU University Press, 1993), p.67

<sup>103</sup> Tomlinson (1991), p.175

cannot be doubted that the USA after WWII had an important economic, political, and technological power, something that was combined with a growing desire on the part of Europeans for American culture. This, according to Pells, partly came about as a consequence of the return of exiled intellectuals and scholars back to Europe from the United States, and also as a result of the presence of American soldiers in European countries along with the Armed Forces Radio Network which served them and which aroused both curiosity and interest on the part of the new European audiences.<sup>104</sup> And although all the above might be regarded as instances of Americanization, the actual fear of Europeans about what can be seen as American cultural imperialism emerged all the more strongly with the rising enthusiasm of the younger generation for American popular culture. Pells raises the issue of whether Europeans' fears of Americanization can instead be seen as fears of 'modernity',<sup>105</sup> considering that in many cases in Europe American culture was consumed as being an image of modernity.<sup>106</sup> In any case, Europeans in general were avidly consuming anything American, starting from domestic consumer goods to housework products to movies to fashionable clothing and to music, copying American models which were by definition 'modern' and 'more advanced'. All in all, Strinati (drawing on Guback) suggests that the American 'economic invasion of Europe and the rest of the world by its cultural industries', was very powerful by early 1970s,<sup>107</sup> a fact that is reflected by the continuing persistence of American influence on cultural output globally.<sup>108</sup>

Although during the early years this was regarded a threat to the national identity of Europeans, in retrospect we might as well claim that there had been no such thing as Americanization, or American cultural imperialism. It is undoubtedly the case that America had an influential part to play during the years of technological and media advancement immediately following WWII, and, being in position to export its culture

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<sup>104</sup> Ibid, p.72

<sup>105</sup> Pells (1993), p.81

<sup>106</sup> A similar point is made by Fehrenbach and Poiger, xxi

<sup>107</sup> Dominic Strinati, 'The taste of America: Americanization and popular culture in Britain' in *Come on Down? Popular Media Culture in Post-War Britain*, Dominic Strinati and Stephen Wagg (eds.), (London: Routledge, 1992), p.55

<sup>108</sup> An interesting reading of cultural imperialism can also be found in Livingston A. White, 'Reconsidering cultural imperialism theory' in *TBS Archives*, 6 (Spring/Summer, 2001), [www.tbsjournal.com/Archives/Spring01/white.html](http://www.tbsjournal.com/Archives/Spring01/white.html) (accessed 29 May 2013)

and consumer products abroad, these developments were soon taken up by the rest of the world (Europe initially). This does not mean that after their initial exposure to American culture Europeans received whatever was given to them unfiltered; informed by different lifestyles and social experiences they could not do so even if they tried. What happened instead was that the American models gradually infiltrated European cultures leading to the creation of new varieties that would come to be seen as representative and typical of the new senses of cultural identity that were beginning to emerge in post-war Europe. This is supported by most of the authors who deal with the issue of American influence on European countries during this period, and also by writers whose work deals with specific cultural styles in specific countries, sometimes giving rise to a range of new concepts and terms. Minganti draws on Umberto Eco who, for example, comments on ‘Il modello americano’ in terms of ‘pidginization’ and ‘creolization’, the former to describe an ‘imperfect but practical formation out of the clash of two different cultures’, and the latter ‘the result of their harmonic fusion into something new’.<sup>109</sup> As can be seen from this, what is debated here is not whether American culture is being *appropriated* by other cultures (instead of dominating them), but the degree to which its influence is being *assimilated* by the culture in question. And this is also my own question in this dissertation.

Nevertheless, American cultural idioms were always seen as threatening to the Europeans, seen as liable to corrupt their own culture, especially when it came to these cultural manifestations that were more attractive to the younger generation, like music and ‘rebel films’ of the James Dean variety. This tendency would be tempered with time, in the process of the realization that it was not corruption of the culture that was taking place, but reinforcement of it, and a remaking of it with the addition of new elements. As Pells states, we can now observe

that the years of America’s cultural ascendancy were relatively brief, that the European countries preserved their cultural distinctiveness despite American influences, and that the postwar cultural relationships between the United States and Europe were marked more by a process of cross-fertilisation than by a one-sided imposition on Europe of American values and life-styles.<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>109</sup> Minganti (1993), p.141

<sup>110</sup> Pells (1993), p.67



Thus, Pells argues that it is not the case that European culture was Americanized after WWII, but, instead, we should think that it was American cultural exports that became ‘Europeanized’ when they reached European soil.<sup>111</sup> Seen from this angle, the term ‘cultural imperialism’ cannot be regarded as sufficiently adequate, and what is entailed could perhaps better be looked at from the perspective of globalization. Even though not clearly characteristic of the earlier years dealt with in this dissertation, since there is indeed clear evidence of American cultural imperialism in the immediate post-war years, it would be beneficial at this stage in the case I am making to consider contrasting views. Negus, for instance, writes that ‘various patterns of difference and the convergence of cultural practices and social activities are making it difficult to identify any power that might be directing such movements’.<sup>112</sup> Thus, each country remains different in its cultural production and consumption, even though it might be drawing on the same influences with other countries. This position will be further discussed later in relation to the idea of globalization. Nonetheless, Negus goes on to restore the validity of the term ‘cultural imperialism’ by drawing our attention to the fact that even if we do agree that the cultural idioms that become global and the musical idioms that become fixed parts of the international repertoire include elements that render them universal, this cannot suggest that the cultures that have produced them are the sole ones that can produce idioms which have this universal quality. It should rather serve to strengthen the idea that the possession of the economic and technological power for the transmission of a particular cultural idiom, along with the universal appeal of the protagonists as ‘star performers’, is what makes this universality possible; and this again is a matter of imperialism.<sup>113</sup> Laing, on the other hand, suggests that the ‘cultural imperialism’ thesis is less applicable in musical terms than in cinema and television products. This he attributes to the lower cost of music production, which makes it easier for nations to produce their own music, and easier for individual artists to act more independently.<sup>114</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> Ibid, p.68

<sup>112</sup> Negus (i), p.176

<sup>113</sup> Ibid, p.178

<sup>114</sup> Dave Laing, ‘The Music Industry and the “Cultural Imperialism” Thesis’ in *Media, Culture and Society*, 8/3, (1986), p.339

In addition, the imposition of cultural products (music in particular) by America on to the rest of the world should not be taken too literally, even though it is true that, especially during the first post-war years, this looked like being the case. Nevertheless, this is seen as a ‘top-down’ cultural imposition designed to further the achievement of specific market interests; nonetheless, what we should also be looking at is the amateur production of music in various countries, as well as its mode of consumption – not least, we should be aware that, America’s influence aside, other countries tend to affect each other in cultural terms, while there had been cases when America had been fundamentally affected by other countries, the most obvious example being the rock ‘British Invasion’ which could be seen as the first step towards the end of the reception period. Achterberg et al., drawing on Tomlinson, remind us that *cultural imperialism* is a concept brought into focus by the threat of dominant cultures (USA in this case) to overwhelm the cultures of more vulnerable countries, although, as they go on to argue, drawing on Kaplan, Bielby and Lee Harrington, this is an oversimplistic approach that only presents ‘cultural flows as a mere one-way flow from core to peripheral countries’.<sup>115</sup> They conclude that it is important that we understand this process by bearing in mind the high possibility that the ‘receivers at the local level will respond to these global pressures’.<sup>116</sup> Similarly, van Elteren, tracing the way the cultural imperialism thesis had been historically criticized in academic circles, stresses that the emergence of newly powerful economies other than the ones that are considered dominant renders ‘outdated’ the possibility of cultural imposition from a small group of countries on to the rest of the world. He goes on to add that there should not be a simplistic equation of the degree of cultural influence with the degree of politico-economic influence in local contexts, while we should also recognize the increase in diversity and hybridization, and realize that consumers can receive cultural imports in ways that are not predetermined, and rethink the view of Western cultural imports as ‘inauthentic’ idioms that threaten to overrun the ‘authentic’ cultures they land in. All in all, he argues, we misconceive the ‘imperializing

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<sup>115</sup> Peter Achterberg, Johan Heilbron, Dick Houtman, and Stef Aupers, ‘A Cultural Globalization of Popular Music? American, Dutch, French, and German Popular Music Charts (1965 to 2006)’ in *American Behavioral Scientist*, 55/5, 2011, p.591

<sup>116</sup> Ibid

culture' as being homogenous, overlooking the fact that it is itself a hybrid culture, influenced by the idioms of different groups.<sup>117</sup>

This very obvious fact, so often ignored in academic scholarship on cultural imperialism, is one that is also touched upon by Strinati; American culture cannot and should not be perceived as homogenous, whereas historically it has been in constant dialogue with European cultures.<sup>118</sup> Later in the same essay Strinati writes that American culture 'is not at all the same, covering different forms and media, and, very importantly, deriving from different ethnic and racial as well as class sources in the USA'.<sup>119</sup> And it is particularly this aspect of American culture that Pells emphasizes to comment on the ability of American popular culture products to appeal to wide and diverse audiences. His main point is that, the fact that within the borders of the USA there is a nation that is by definition diverse, comprised of heterogeneous ethnic, racial, class, and location groups, led the producers of cultural products into quests for results that would have a wide appeal initially at home. Bearing in mind the largely monocultural character of the European nations during the post-war years, this was something they could not easily relate to and they were therefore unable to 'compete in the international arena'. It is partly this necessity of the American media to achieve 'multicultural appeal' that gave them the experience, knowledge, and ability to reach 'multi-ethnic' audiences outside the borders of America as well.<sup>120</sup> However, this is not to deny that there is a certain type of culture, universally acknowledged as American, that has been influential in the development of world popular culture for reasons that are partly being explored in this study. As Tomlinson suggests, '[i]t is reasonable to think of this "hegemonic" culture, this dominant "version" of America, as that exported by corporate capitalism, such that will appear to other nationalities as American culture pure and simple'.<sup>121</sup> Although this might be acceptable for the majority of American cultural products, as we have already seen, rock'n'roll always remained tightly connected to its african-american roots however 'cleaned' it had been before its transmission to other countries. Nonetheless, the racial undertones read in many American cultural products have not always been taken up in

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<sup>117</sup> Elteren, p.171

<sup>118</sup> Strinati, p.67

<sup>119</sup> Ibid, p.77

<sup>120</sup> Pells (1997), p.209

<sup>121</sup> Tomlinson (1991), p.75

the same ways. As Fehrenbach and Poiger write, ‘American culture abroad has been neither automatically racist nor anti-racist, but has taken on complex and varying meanings in constructions of racial (and other) hierarchies within consuming nations’.<sup>122</sup>

The above discussion of American cultural imperialism follows on from my discussion of what had happened in the post-war years. It is hard to argue against the fact that rock’n’roll in European countries during what I have called the ‘reception phase’ is acting as an ‘imperializing’ cultural element, in the sense that during its early years in the European countries considered here it remains largely unaffected by local cultural forces. On the other hand, as Curran and Park observe (drawing also on Stuart Hall), even in the context of the cultural diversity that is evident today, hegemonic evidence is hard to ignore; indeed, as Hall has suggested, global mass culture still revolves around the West, something obvious also from the world-wide use of the English language.<sup>123</sup> The broad presence of English as a world language is undoubtedly an important factor contributing to the preeminence of American and English popular culture universally. As Pells writes, ‘[m]ore than other languages, English tends to have shorter words and a simpler grammar, and its sentences are often less abstract and more succinct. These qualities were especially useful if one was composing headlines and newspaper stories, captions or cartoons, song lyrics or advertising copy, movie subtitles, or the terse dialogue favored by film directors and television producers.’<sup>124</sup> A very similar point is made by Tunstall when he writes that ‘English is the language best suited to comic strips, headlines, riveting first sentences, photo captions, dubbing, sub-titling, pop songs, hoardings, disc-jockey banter, news flushes, sung commercials’.<sup>125</sup> Here, Strinati’s argument, shifting ideas away from Americanization and towards post-modernity, is still relevant. He suggests that ‘post-modernity’ can be seen as ‘the decline of a specifically Americanized, and the rise of an internationalized popular culture, to say nothing of the fact that we might be becoming “Europeanized” as we are being “Americanized”’.<sup>126</sup> Evidently, the centre of domination remains the West, but the idea of American or cultural imperialism has grown irrelevant;

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<sup>122</sup> Fehrenbach and Poiger, p.xvi

<sup>123</sup> James Curran and Myung-Jin Park, ‘Beyond globalization theory’ in *De-Westernizing Media Studies*, James Curran and Myung-Jin Park (eds.), (London: Routledge, 2000), p.5

<sup>124</sup> Pells (1997), p.206

<sup>125</sup> Tunstall, p.128

<sup>126</sup> Strinati, p.49

we should instead be looking on the idea of globalization. This is essential if, like Tomlinson suggests, we recognize the changes in the global power structures that came shortly after what is normally considered as the period of ‘cultural imperialism’ and, as he writes ‘replaces the distribution of global power that we know as “imperialism”, which characterized the modern period up to, say, the 1960s.’<sup>127</sup> Tomlinson goes on to make the persuasive case that ‘[w]hat replaces “imperialism” is “globalisation”’.<sup>128</sup>

### **‘When I’m one with the world and my mind’: the paradox of globalization**

The dynamic of globalization is clearly very important when speaking about popular music, and especially in relation to national identity in the way I am approaching it here. The concept of globalization has been exhaustively examined from many different perspectives and by a range of disciplines, and it might seem that it hardly needs much justification in the context of popular music. Nevertheless, in spite of appearances ‘globalization’ is not a straight-forward concept that can be applied anywhere, let alone to the case of popular music; the idea that just because people coming from different countries might be using the same musical elements makes these musical elements part of a larger homogenizing process sounds too convenient. In fact it is thoroughly misleading and superficial. Much has already been written on this issue, and it is generally agreed that what happens with music is not homogenization but, instead, as Negus suggests, a reinforcement and re-creation of various cultures facilitated by the appropriation and assimilation of foreign musical idioms.<sup>129</sup> In many cases, globalization is misleadingly treated as synonymous with Americanization – a tendency that has been tempered in recent years by, for example, Appadurai, who writes: ‘[g]lobalization does not necessarily or even frequently imply Americanization, and to the extent that different societies appropriate the materials of modernity differently, there is still ample room for the deep study of specific geographies, histories, and languages’.<sup>130</sup> Paddison, drawing on

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<sup>127</sup> Tomlinson (1991), p.175

<sup>128</sup> Ibid, p.175.

<sup>129</sup> Negus (2) (1996), pp.179-95

<sup>130</sup> Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (Minneapolis, London: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), p.17

Habermas' interpretations of the notion of modernization, makes the connection between globalization and modernization more explicit when he suggests that:

we understand globalization as a version of 'modernization' in this sense – the global extension of capitalism to rationalize world economies and bring them under one principle. That this also results in permeation, 'blending' and homogenization of previously diverse cultures is simply an epiphenomenon. It is equally true to say that the same process can also encourage the appearance of diversity if required – for instance, for the purposes of world tourism and the package holiday industry, or the commodification of 'world music'.<sup>131</sup>

Indeed, modernization as globalization in this sense is a rationalized attempt driven by economic motivation, one that also affects the cultural output internationally. Nonetheless, however powerful the forces that could result in homogenization might be, there always exist differences in the people's everyday lives, whether these are cultural creators or consumers, censors or broadcasters. Seen in this way, each country remains different in its cultural production and consumption, even while drawing on the same materials.

Notions like 'glocalization', 'multiculturalization', and cultural 'syncretism' further complicate and obscure the concept of globalization. Achterberg et al. speak of glocalisation as the local adaptation of the global idiom in a way that expresses a national culture, whereas multiculturalization is the coexistence of different cultures which develop through time, and which in the process influence and are being influenced by many different cultures. Cultural 'syncretism' reveals the notion of a cultural melting pot, where parts of many different cultures create a new culture; unlike multiculturalization, it speaks about blending, rather than co-existence,<sup>132</sup> revealing once again what I see as false ideas of an (impossible) homogeneity. In the case of popular music and the way in which it is treated in this dissertation, it seems to me that the concept of transculturation, as coined by Wallis and Malm and also used by Regev, is the most appropriate for present purposes. As Wallis and Malm write, 'individual music cultures pick up elements from transcultural music, but an increasing number of national and local music cultures

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<sup>131</sup> Max Paddison, 'Centres and margins: shifting grounds in the conceptualization of modernism' in *Rethinking Musical Modernism*, Academic Conferences of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Vol.CXXII, Department of Fine Arts and Music, Book 6 (2008), p.70

<sup>132</sup> Achterberg, Heilbron, Houtman, Aupers, (2011), p.591

also contribute features to transcultural music. The resulting process is a two-way flow which we have termed transculturation. As the music and electronic industries spread their hardware and software to different countries, this process starts'.<sup>133</sup> The centre of this process of transculturation is anglo-american pop/rock. As Regev writes, '[t]he simultaneous convergence of its influence, of access to music industry technologies, of local music culture and of the will to create something different explains, according to Wallis and Malm, the first stage of transculturation [...]'.<sup>134</sup> Garofalo interprets Wallis and Malm's term as follows: 'elements of international pop/rock are incorporated into local and national musical cultures, and indigenous influences contribute to the development of new transnational styles'.<sup>135</sup> I suggest that, in effect, transculturation as a process also stands in need of a concept of cultural hybridity, along the lines of what Homi Bhabha proposes for an understanding of '*international culture*',

based not on the exoticism of multiculturalism or the *diversity* of cultures, but on the inscription and articulation of culture's *hybridity*. To that end we should remember that it is the 'inter' – the cutting edge of translation and negotiation, the *in-between* space – that carries the burden of the meaning of culture. It makes it possible to begin envisaging national, anti-nationalist histories of the 'people'. And by exploring this Third Space, we may elude the politics of polarity and emerge as the others of ourselves.<sup>136</sup>

The possibility of new readings of the self is a suggestion that runs throughout this dissertation and calls for the acceptance of culture in general and music in particular as living entities open to new influences, which they can then adopt to create hybrids out of the dialogue of the new element with their (already hybrid) self.

In the era of Wagner's cultural influence on various other countries it is unlikely that anyone would have talked about globalization; it is true that it is the media development of the late nineteenth and especially the twentieth century that made it an even more powerful concept. As the first instances of nationalism are seen to spring out

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<sup>133</sup> Roger Wallis and Krister Malm, 'Patterns of Change' in *On Record: Rock, Pop, and the Written Word*, Simon Frith and Andrew Goodwin (eds.) (London: Routledge, 1990), p.177

<sup>134</sup> Motti Regev, 'Israeli rock, or a study in the politics of "local authenticity"' in *Popular Music*, 11/1 (1992), p.1

<sup>135</sup> Reebee Garofalo (i), 'Introduction' in *Rockin' the Boat: Mass Music and Mass Movements*, Garofalo, Reebee (ed.), (Boston: South End Press, 1992), p.7

<sup>136</sup> Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London and New York: Routledge, 1994), p.38

of the advancement of typography and the print evolution,<sup>137</sup> one can trace the first instances of the idea of globalization to the emergence of new technological means and the advancement of the media. And it is these technological developments and their universal availability together with their potential homogenizing effects that prompted, as Burnett suggests, the term ‘global village’ by Marshall McLuhan<sup>138</sup> (as a description of the world that is now characterized by technologies that allow the flow of information from several points to various directions at the same time, making thus the globe a village by altering the relationship between ‘time’ and ‘space’). This is something that Appadurai has stressed when he wrote that the global political economy involves a relationship between human movement, technological flow, and financial transfers.<sup>139</sup> For our purposes, where we are concerned with the cultural dimension of globalization, more particularly as related to popular music, we will focus on the technological advancement and flow of the mass media. A similar point is made by Connell and Gibson, when they argue that the beginning of globalization as we understand it could be traced back to technological advancements in radio, music storage (records), television, and film, as well as the improvements in global communications like air travel enabling bands to go on tour worldwide.<sup>140</sup> Mass media, as Appadurai argues, are able to create solidarities, a ‘community of sentiment’, enabling people to imagine and feel things together.<sup>141</sup> They are, however, also able to defy borders and communicate ideas to distant geographical locations, regardless of where these ideas were initially developed. Thus, the purpose of the mass media can always be seen as two-fold. As has been mentioned above, the worldwide spread of rock’n’roll was empowered by technological developments such as the 45 rpm single and the portable radio.<sup>142</sup> The mass media, nonetheless, take on a double role when it comes to globalization since, while they spread cultural products globally, they also play a very important role in the unification of national groups; on the one hand they bring foreign elements within the borders of a particular country, but on

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<sup>137</sup> Anderson (1991), pp.44-45

<sup>138</sup> Robert Burnett, *The Global Jukebox: The International Music Industry* (London: Routledge, 1996), p.1

<sup>139</sup> Appadurai, p.35; Appadurai’s model of *ethnoscapes*, *mediascapes*, *technoscapes*, *financescapes* and *ideoscapes* has been broadly influential in discussions on globalization

<sup>140</sup> Connell and Gibson, p.52-56

<sup>141</sup> Appadurai (1996), p.8

<sup>142</sup> Wicke (1990), p.8



the other hand the media of each country can operate in specific ways that can have the effect of strengthening the so called 'national sentiments' of the people of that country.

It is evident that modernization in this sense stems from a combination of economic growth and technological advancement, and followed American models which at the time were very successful. This, in retrospect, can be seen neither as Americanization and nor as globalization but, instead, an appropriation of international elements. In Appadurai's words, '[i]f the genealogy of cultural forms is about their circulation across regions, the history of these forms is about their ongoing domestication into local practice. The very interaction of historical and genealogical forms is uneven, diverse and contingent'.<sup>143</sup> If we take into account Appadurai's claim, then we can assume that the processes of domestication of a specific cultural form vary from place to place, both chronologically as well as stylistically. To acknowledge this also allows us to observe the diversity of variations in the appropriation of the same musical idioms, and how these might influence one another. It should be clear by now that globalization as a term carries within itself the dialectic of the global and the local. We all know that there always exist local variations of global trends; the difference, in the argument I am putting forward here, however, is that these local variations go on to become authentic means of national identity, and authentic elements of the musical repertoire of the countries in question, thus ceasing to be solely elements of the mimetic treatment of a foreign idiom by people from different cultures. Drawing on Tsing, Stokes writes that:

Tsing suggests, instead, a grasp of globalization as a set of projects with cultural and institutional specificities; projects that construct, refer to, dream of, and fantasize of, in very diverse ways, a world as their zone of operation. Globalization in this sense is nothing new. What the modern period has added is a certain self-consciousness, a certain obsession with units and scales. She sees 'global' and 'local' not as places or processes, but as key discursive elements in world-making projects, around which intensifying self-consciousness and anxiety hovers. The institutional and discursive elements of such world-making projects are the focus of her proposal for a critical ethnography of globalization, one that focuses on the 'located specificity of globalist dreams' but that also attends to their hegemonic dynamics and the complex processes by which they interact.<sup>144</sup>

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<sup>143</sup> Appadurai (1996), p.17

<sup>144</sup> Martin Stokes, 'Music and the global order' in *Annual Review Anthropology*, 33 (2004), p.51

Cvetkovitch and Kellner propose that the global should be theorized as ‘the matrix of transnational economic, political, and cultural forces that are circulating around the globe and producing universal, global conditions, often transversing and even erasing previously formed national and regional boundaries’.<sup>145</sup> This, however, is only partly true. Because in many cases it is in the particularities of the appropriation of the global that the specificities of the local become more visible, it is in the observation that not all localities treat the global idioms (which are always the same for all) the same way that the recognition of the incontestably local can be acknowledged. The incontestably local (for my purposes ‘national’) can manifest in a range of different ways – for example, active music production, official and unofficial treatment of cultural products by a country’s institutions and, not least, the audience’s interpretations of local idioms.

The audience’s response to global idioms has been stressed throughout, and not without good reason, but drawing solely on this factor will not help us to build up the full picture. The appropriation of ‘global idioms’ as a process is characterized by complex practices and relationships. As Tomlinson suggests, ‘[t]he cultural space of the global is one to which we are constantly *referred*, particularly by the mass media, but one in which it is extremely difficult to locate our own personal experience’.<sup>146</sup> And this is because our personal experience is tied up with activities and influences that are often not immediately connected with these global idioms, but with the practices of our specific localities, national institutions and cultural norms. As Crane has suggested, ‘[u]nderstanding the public’s responses to global culture in different countries and in different settings within those countries necessitates a broader conceptualization of reception theory, one that goes beyond focusing entirely on the audience itself and instead examines the relationships between the imported culture and the national culture, as well as the cultural entrepreneurs’.<sup>147</sup> Thus, understanding the assimilation of a cultural idiom into a foreign context is not solely a matter of the audience’s responses to the idiom, but of interpreting the cultural forces that characterize this context as well.

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<sup>145</sup> Ann Cvetkovitch and Douglas Kellner, ‘Introduction’ in *Articulating the Global and the Local: Globalization and Cultural Studies*, Ann Cvetkovitch and Douglas Kellner (eds.), (Oxford: Westview Press, 1997), p.14

<sup>146</sup> Tomlinson (1991), p.177

<sup>147</sup> Diana Crane, ‘Culture and globalization: Theoretical models and emerging trends’ in *Global Culture: Media, Arts, Policy, and Globalization*, Diana Crane, Nobuko Kawashima, Ken’ichi Kawasaki (eds.), (New York, London: Routledge, 2002), pp.18-19

### **‘Mother should I trust the government?’: the influence of the nation-state on popular music**

In the second part of this chapter we have looked at some political aspects surrounding popular music in general and rock’n’roll in particular, before we turned to look at notions of Americanization and globalization. Both of these notions relate directly to the assimilation of rock’n’roll because of the importance of the factor of the nation-state which acts as a mediator between the nation that exports and the importing culture. As has been briefly mentioned above, the attitudes and policies of nation-states regarding music styles and genres affects largely what is being promoted, broadcast, publicized, and what is being funded, whereas the possible censorship of specific musical styles can give them revolutionary connotations, regardless of the fact that the music itself was not meant to evoke revolutionary sentiments. Looking more specifically at rock’n’roll, the first musical style that went on to become an international popular music style, the attitudes and policies of nation-states – which, as we are to see later, often resembled the political position taken by certain nation-states towards the political, economic and cultural dominance of the USA – had a major impact on rock’n’roll’s process towards assimilation in specific European contexts. Nevertheless, the importance of particular nation-states’ treatment of cultural activities within their borders is not something that emerged with rock’n’roll, but is part of a process that has a historical continuity.

Curran and Park, for example, mention how the rise of the international news agencies that occurred in the nineteenth century, and the global presence of Hollywood in the 1920s onward led nation-states to the development of protective responses, mainly manifested in the national control of mass media like radio and, later, television. In their words, ‘[t]he motives for this extension of national control, though mixed, included strong altruistic elements in many liberal democracies. It was argued that public ownership or regulation of broadcasting was needed in order to promote an informed democracy, to which opposition parties as well as government had a right of access; to facilitate collective self-expression and national identity; and to ensure high standards

and a planned diversity of programs'.<sup>148</sup> As Crothers observes, most of the European nation-states historically controlled the newly developed media of mass communication (printing, and similarly film, and audiovisual media) in fear that they could be used to corrupt people, and also because these were considered as a 'tool of state policy', and 'served to promote specific political values'.<sup>149</sup> This, of course, can be contrasted to the way the American nation-state had always been more flexible to the regulation of mass media, and this independence is considered to be one of the reasons why the American audiovisual media grew more powerfully and creatively within the centuries.<sup>150</sup> Axtmann has noted that the success of the nation-state within the past two centuries came from its ability to claim that it can provide 'the economic well-being, the physical security, and the cultural identity of its citizens'.<sup>151</sup> For the past two decades, however, the above features have been challenged by global processes which, seen from economic, military, and media perspectives, have affected the link between the nation-state and its citizens.<sup>152</sup> Nation-states have always, for various and often complex reasons, been actively engaged, directly or indirectly, with the kinds of musical activities that occur within their borders. This will be discussed more particularly in Chapter 6 in relation to the countries with which this study is concerned, as the involvement of nation-states can have important effects both on the extent of musical activities, in terms of musical production, broadcasting and consumption, and on the meaning given to them. In this respect Attali has written that: '[a]ll music, any organization of sounds is then a tool for the creation or consolidation of a community, of a totality. It is what links a power center to its subjects, and thus, more generally, it is an attribute of power in all of its forms. Therefore, any theory of power today must include a theory of the localization of noise and its endowment with form'.<sup>153</sup> Tomlinson likewise highlights the importance of the nation-state in the creation of the sense of a national identity. As he writes, '[t]he fact that the

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<sup>148</sup> Curran and Park, p.8

<sup>149</sup> Lane Crothers, *Globalization and American Popular Culture*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.(Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2010), p.84

<sup>150</sup> Ibid, p.85

<sup>151</sup> Roland Axtmann, 'Collective identity and the democratic nation-state in the age of globalization' in *Articulating the Global and the Local: Globalization and Cultural Studies*, Ann Cvetkovitch and Douglas Kellner (eds.), (Oxford: Westview Press, 1997), p.44

<sup>152</sup> Ibid

<sup>153</sup> Jacques Attali, *Noise: The Political Economy of Music*, Brian Massumi (transl.) (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1977), p.6

nation-state is the most significant politico-economic unit into which the world is divided means that there is often a good deal of deliberate “cultural construction” involved in the making of national identities’, though he goes on to say that national identity should not be conceived as ‘a purely ideological construct’.<sup>154</sup> Thus, one should be able to recognize that the importation of foreign musical idioms can often complicate the efforts on the part of the nation-state to create a sense of national identity in musical terms.

However, nation-states remain highly influential in these terms, especially during the years we are looking at in this dissertation. Cloonan writes that ‘while it is obviously possible that people in one location might share musical influences with those thousands of miles away, rather than in their immediate environs, they are likely to be subject to different constraints upon how they can indulge those tastes. As will become apparent, the main constraints may be the particular Nation-State which they inhabit’.<sup>155</sup> Cloonan here touches on a very important factor in popular music’s history in individual countries, something often neglected in favour of sociological and aesthetic readings of popular music. He makes the point that: ‘Nation-States vary in their responses both to globalisation *and* popular music. The relative autonomy of many Nation-States also needs some acknowledgment’.<sup>156</sup> Through broadcasting policies, quotas, censorship, copyright laws, cultural policies etc., Nation-States can affect the way popular music is produced, disseminated, and consumed within their borders.<sup>157</sup> The type of relationship between Nation-State and popular music is important to the character of the popular musics produced in any particular country. Cloonan outlines three types, and I will make use of his typology in the case of the countries I am looking at here. Regarding Britain, which he describes as a *benign state*, he proposes that, whereas there is a certain degree of control when it comes to live music, popular music is left ‘to the market, indirect subsidiaries not withstanding.’<sup>158</sup> For Cloonan, benign states ‘have censorship and

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<sup>154</sup> Tomlinson (1991), p.69

<sup>155</sup> Martin Cloonan, ‘Pop and the Nation-State: Towards a Theorisation’ in *Popular Music*, 18/2 (May, 1999), p.194

<sup>156</sup> Ibid, p.194

<sup>157</sup> Rightly one would argue that this is not the case today, due to the technological developments and the information flow through the internet, something I will not be touching upon here for two reasons: firstly, it is partly irrelevant to the period that this dissertation is concerned with (1955-1985), and also it further needs discussion, which will lead me out of my argument.

<sup>158</sup> Cloonan (1999), p.204

broadcasting laws, but tend to regard the state's role as being to referee between competing business interests rather than controlling or promoting popular music. Popular music is not high on the cultural agendas of such Nation-States.'.<sup>159</sup> However, there have been instances in British popular music history when it was affected by legislation; this is the case with the 1959 Obscene Publication Act where 'obscene' is defined as an article 'which, taken as a whole, tends to "deprave and corrupt" those who are likely to come in contact with it'.<sup>160</sup> The French nation-state has always been protective of its cultural products, considering music as 'something of a national asset'. France in these terms belongs to the category of *promotional* state (as is Italy, although in less direct ways); a state of this type will apply policies that would prevent the threatening possibility of its music being dominated by anglo-american idioms, applying quotas or finding ways to promote further the indigenous popular music.<sup>161</sup> The third type of state is the *authoritarian*, which strictly controls music-related activities from recording to live music to imported music. East Germany was largely an authoritarian nation-state in this sense.<sup>162</sup> Furthermore it needs to be noted here that the types of nation-states in relation to popular music do not stay unaltered through time and that each nation-state might fall in and out of these three categories mentioned above whenever circumstances and policies change. An obvious example of this when it comes to the countries this dissertation is dealing with is Greece: it has been at times a *benign* state, a *promotional* state and, under the military junta, an *authoritarian* state. As Fehrenbach and Poiger write, '[a]fter all, cultural economies are highly dependent on political conditions; institutional and legal frameworks that control the import and export of culture rise and fall with political regimes'.<sup>163</sup> A more detailed view of the (sometimes changing) roles of popular music within the British, French, German, Greek, and Italian nation-states will be presented in Chapter 6.

Curran and Park, writing at the end of the previous century, were still very supportive of the importance of the nation and the nation-state as gatekeepers along with

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<sup>159</sup> Ibid, p.204

<sup>160</sup> Martin Cloonan, *Banned! Censorship of Popular Music in Britain: 1962-92* (Aldershot, Arena, 1996), p.75

<sup>161</sup> Cloonan (1999), p.204

<sup>162</sup> Ibid, p.203

<sup>163</sup> Fehrenbach and Poiger, p.xxiii

and against the forces of globalization. Nation-states control television, press and broadcasting, and, whereas ‘transnational’ broadcasts do indeed take place, claims that these gain the audience’s preference cannot be supported. Additionally, as Curran and Park suggest, it is within the nation-state’s authority to license national television and radio stations, and in this way to determine the control of these mediums.<sup>164</sup> Nevertheless, however important the nation-state is in these terms, it still remains one of the numerous factors that affect the assimilation process which I am putting forward in this study. As Curran and Park have put it:

[d]ifferent nations have different languages, political systems, power structures, cultural traditions, economies, international links, and histories.[...] media systems are shaped not merely by national regulatory regimes and national audience preferences, but by a complex sense of social relations that have taken shape in national contexts. It is precisely the historically grounded density of these relationships that tends to be excluded from simplified global accounts, in which theorists survey the universe while never straying far from the international airport.<sup>165</sup>

Negus, drawing on Grossberg, makes a similar point by pointing to the idea of “articulation”, in which particular sounds have to seek out, be sought by, and connect with particular audiences. During such a complex social process, the meaning of music and any social effects it may generate arise out of a process in which performer, industry, text, and audience “articulate” with each other and with the surrounding culture and socio-political system’.<sup>166</sup> My main concern in this dissertation is to observe the ways in which, through this kind of articulation, certain musical idioms can be assimilated within the popular music of a country, and find their way into its musical capital. I argue that in this way they become accepted as parts of an indigenous popular music that remains aligned with the country’s national identity. I shall now turn to discuss the notion of national identity in order to clarify the way it is used in this study.

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<sup>164</sup> Curran and Park, p.9

<sup>165</sup> Ibid, pp.9-10

<sup>166</sup> Keith Negus, ‘Popular music: between celebration and despair’ in *Questioning the Media: A Critical Introduction*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., John Downing, Ali Mohammadi, Annabelle Sreberny-Mohammadi (eds.), (California: Sage Publications, 1995), p.389

### **‘You are here with me to stay’: rock, authenticity, national identity**

In the process of assimilation of rock musical idioms within specific national contexts – that is to say, the complex relationships between the people, and the social, cultural, political, technological, and industrial processes that occur within national boundaries – the nation-state acts as a gate keeper by employing policies like censorship and broadcasting regulations, and thus it partly defines what is taking place within its borders, without, however, necessarily attempting directly to exclude what is imported. As has been suggested above, one of the nation-state’s major concerns is to maintain a sense of national identity in order to achieve a cultural consistency within national borders. However, prohibiting the reception of anything cultural that is of foreign origin is something that is practically unachievable in reasonable terms (especially if one considers the technological developments that allow the transmission of – perhaps most importantly – music), let alone the fact that economic and industrial interests related to this kind of international exchange render such cultural prohibition impossible. A common feature of countries that find themselves in the process of interaction with elements derived from other cultures, is the simultaneous attempt to bring their own culture to the fore and make it more prominent. Maybe in some cases, and in popular music in particular, this happens instinctively with the creation of new musical languages that incorporate ‘global’ elements into the local culture. This can also be seen to be supported by Appadurai, when he writes that:

The megarhetoric of developmental modernization (economic growth, high technology, agribusiness, schooling, and militarization) in many countries is still with us. But it is often punctuated, interrogated, and domesticated by the micronarratives of film, television, music, and other expressive forms, which allow modernity to be rewritten more as a vernacular globalization and less as a concession to large-scale national and international policies.<sup>167</sup>

As is to be seen in the course of this study, in the case of the five countries with which this dissertation deals the assimilation of rock’n’roll musical idioms takes place within a dialectic that both acknowledges and simultaneously rejects the processes of globalization. It is evident that during the years of rock music’s heyday (from 1955 up to 1985) there had indeed been a common rock culture in these countries; it was not ‘global’

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<sup>167</sup> Appadurai (1996), p.10



rock, and it was not by any means homogenized. It was an expression of local cultures through global idioms, but could not be seen as ‘glocalization’ and of course it was not ‘transnationalization’, since specific musical idioms originating from the main centres of anglo-american popular music were very concretely used by all the influenced countries under consideration. I would venture to argue that what we are facing is a common international musical language, a pre-fixed set of musical idioms, which is being treated differently by each country it enters, a treatment that in its turn results in idiosyncratic uses of the same materials. Using the same register, each country discovers its own voice; and this, so I argue, becomes ‘authentically’ its own as it becomes assimilated as part of its country’s collective cultural capital. Or, as Canon puts it, ‘[m]ore optimistic approaches, or at least those more skeptical about the supposed uniformity of effect of cultural globalization, might see it as an example of “cultural reterritorialization”, viewing cultural products as resources that can be reinscribed with meanings, adapted and reworked to relate to local contexts’.<sup>168</sup> In the way the situation is looked at in this study, the final assimilation of rock idioms in any given country is not an optimistic perspective on a process that could have destructive outcomes; it is the acknowledgment that certain musical idioms – and african-american idioms as carried through rock’n’roll are a powerful paradigm of this – exist and are being intensively used within these countries for a sufficiently long period so as to start belonging to a particular culture. Not least, generations of musicians and audiences that were born and raised after the assimilation process had begun (at some point between the reception, imitation, development, or even, after the assimilation) often perceive these musical idioms as representative idioms of their native popular music scene. In a sense, therefore, these idioms appear to have entered into the musical-cultural capital of a given country and can be seen as aligned with a generally recognized sense of ‘national identity’ as expressed in musical terms.

However, it is not easy to speak of notions of ‘national identity’ or ‘national authenticity’ if some things are not further clarified, since the idea of the ‘nation’ itself is not one that is completely straightforward either. Raymond Williams argues that the

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<sup>168</sup> Steve Cannon, ‘Globalization, Americanization and Hip Hop in France’ in *Popular Music in France from Chanson to Techno: Culture, Identity and Society*, Hugh Dauncey and Steve Cannon (eds.) (Hants: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2003), p.193

derivative word ‘nationality’, although used from the 17<sup>th</sup> century, ‘acquired its political sense’ in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.<sup>169</sup> Indeed, according to James Anderson, nations as imagined communities are not something ‘natural, or an ‘essential and timeless feature of human society’, but, instead, are a modern idea.<sup>170</sup> He goes on to suggest that each nation is unique in being defined by its ‘territorial setting’. Nations are, he writes, ‘*internally unifying*’; they play down the divisions and conflicts of, for instance, class and gender within the “imagined community”, partly by “externalizing” the sources of its problems’.<sup>171</sup> Drawing on Rose, he argues that in doing so they exaggerate the division between them and others. Additionally, Anderson reminds us that the rise of nationalism in Western Europe came in the 18<sup>th</sup> century,<sup>172</sup> and was further strengthened by the development of printing, which helped the spread of unifying language idioms within a given ‘territory’.<sup>173</sup> In many cases language is considered a particularly important element when it comes to defining a nation. As Anderson writes,

What the eye is to the lover – that particular, ordinary eye he or she is born with – language – whatever language history has made his or her mother-tongue – is to the patriot. Through that language, encountered at mother’s knee and parted with only at the grave, pasts are restored, fellowships are imagined, and futures dreamed.<sup>174</sup>

He also emphasizes that:

It is always a mistake to treat languages in the way that certain nationalist ideologues treat them – as *emblems* of nation-ness, like flags, costumes, folk-dances, and the rest. Much the most important thing about language is its capacity for generating imagined communities, building in effect *particular solidarities*.<sup>175</sup>

What can be taken from Anderson’s argument on the significance of language is that, while not necessarily a nationalist ‘weapon’, languages can be held to provide continuity

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<sup>169</sup> Raymond Williams, *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*, revised edition, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), p.213

<sup>170</sup> James Anderson, ‘The exaggerated death of the nation-state’ in *A Global World? Re-Ordering Political Space*, James Anderson, Chris Brook, Allan Cochrane (eds.) (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), p.69

<sup>171</sup> *Ibid*, p.71

<sup>172</sup> Benedict Anderson (1991), p.11

<sup>173</sup> *Ibid*, p.44

<sup>174</sup> *Ibid*, p.154

<sup>175</sup> *Ibid*, p.133

between the people of a given nation: to connect them and solidify them and to help in the creation of a concrete cultural identity. The importance of language use for each of the countries considered here can be reflected in the country's popular music, as well as the tensions that result when the language of the lyrics becomes a way of positioning us within national processes. Even though it might appear obvious that the language in which a song's lyrics are written will naturally serve to connect the song with the specific country to which the language belongs, this, of course, can at the same time present complications: on the one hand there are countries that are not by definition monolingual, while on the other hand there are cases where several countries share the same language. Nonetheless, as will be revealed in the course of this dissertation, the language used in songs is a very important element when it comes to arguments about national identity and authenticity, and this will be further stressed in Chapter 4, where issues concerning the tension created in relation to the use of English and indigenous lyrics in rock songs will be discussed. Language is indeed an important feature that signals national consistency, but is definitely not the only one. Among a wide range of important unifying features, we must also include music. As Connell and Gibson point out, looking back at ancient times we can see that every culture includes music, and people in all cultures have shared musical idioms through which they associate with one other.<sup>176</sup> However, musical cultures have never existed as entirely autonomous entities that develop unaffected by external influences. Historically, most cultures are considered to be hybrids. Affected by foreign elements introduced into the culture by returning warriors, colonialists, missionaries, travellers, immigrants, etc., cultures have always been living organisms that keep developing, changing, and evolving. This, again, does not mean that they do not acquire a specific cultural identity; it just means that this does not remain unaltered through time. As the reader might already have observed, the terms 'nation' and 'culture' have a strong tendency to alternate and even switch, but it should be clear by now that in the present context the two tend to interconnect and become difficult to distinguish (something that will be further discussed below). For the moment what is important here is the idea that people within a nation are connected with a specific cultural identity. One way of understanding this connection would be to see it in the context of Tomlinson's

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<sup>176</sup> Connell and Gibson, p.20

statement that '[n]ational identity is a distinctive form of cultural identity owing to the high political agenda and economic stakes involved'.<sup>177</sup> This is, however, a statement that cannot be accepted without questioning in this occasion. But before turning to a more detailed discussion of the connection between ideas of cultural identity and national identity, we need to turn our attention once again towards the idea of nation and the difficult concept of 'national authenticity'.

'Authenticity' is yet another idea that requires further clarification at this stage. This dissertation is not dealing with authenticity as the main aesthetic question of an 'authentic' work, nor its historically-informed performance, nor the connection between musicians and audiences, nor the means used by subcultures in order to distinguish themselves from the mainstream or from cultures which they consider 'inauthentic'. Neither does it concern the works' relation to commercial interests, nor the aesthetics of self-expression. Instead, here we are dealing with the question of 'authenticity' in discussing whether idioms from any particular musical style and of any origin can 'authentically' express a culture different from the one in which they originated. Authenticity in relation to popular music is a concept which has occupied many scholars and which has aroused strongly conflicting views. For Grossberg (according to Connell and Gibson), authenticity has three dimensions: one grounded in the aesthetic experience as seen in 'the skill and creativity of the artists'; the second in 'the construction of the rhythmic and sexual body (often linked to dance and black music)'; and finally, in 'the ability to articulate private but common desires, feelings and experiences, through a common language that constructs or expresses the notion of community'.<sup>178</sup> And it is this third aspect, and in particular the relation to 'community', that I shall stress in this study. Many arguments have been made regarding this issue, and I summarize some of them here in an effort to make the main focus of this dissertation clearer and to build the foundations necessary to support the main argument presented. Contrary to Regev,<sup>179</sup> who, in the context of Israeli popular music, blends the notion of rock authenticity with its perception as art, I take a different path. From my point of view, it is not the recognition of its high quality that makes a musical idiom capable of being able

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<sup>177</sup> Tomlinson (1991), p.79

<sup>178</sup> Connell and Gibson, p.29

<sup>179</sup> Regev (1992), pp.1-14

‘authentically’ to express a national identity, but it is its use by the people of each country as an idiom able to express their musical ‘expeditions’ intuitively, to describe their social and historical position by being used as an idiom that belongs to their musical-cultural capital. Keightley writes (though not from the perspective of national identity and authenticity), that ‘[a]uthenticity is not something “in” the music, though it is frequently experienced as such, believed to be actually audible, and then taken to have a material form. Rather, authenticity is a value, a quality we ascribe to perceived relationships between music, socio-industrial practices, and listeners or audiences’.<sup>180</sup> To consider a musical idiom authentic is to understand its function in relation to the culture in which it exists, and this is what I mostly aim to do in this dissertation.

I will now turn to the challenging task of trying to distinguish between the notions of culture and nation, as, though they might have been used alternately so far without a clear distinction being drawn among them, they clearly are not synonyms, even though their meaning often overlaps. The reason is that the two terms are interconnected and an actual separation is not easy to pinpoint. In order to do so, I will firstly turn to a consideration of the idea of culture. Raymond Williams has called the term ‘culture’ ‘one of the two or three most complicated words in the English language’,<sup>181</sup> and, after exploring its historic use, he suggested three main uses of the term. According to Williams, culture can be interpreted as i) ‘a general process of intellectual, spiritual and aesthetic development’; ii) ‘a particular way of life, whether of a people, a period, a group, or humanity in general’; and iii) ‘the works and practices of intellectual and especially artistic activity’, as is music, literature, painting, etc.<sup>182</sup> It is evident from this that the second interpretation of the term offered by Williams is the one that is used in this study, while at the same time it should be noted that, according to Williams, all these senses surrounding the notion of culture cannot be easily separated. As he puts it, ‘[t]he complex of the senses indicates a complex argument about the relations between general human development and a particular way of life, and between both and the works and practices of art and intelligence’.<sup>183</sup> Hence, the different senses that the term culture

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<sup>180</sup> Keightley, p.131

<sup>181</sup> Williams, p.87

<sup>182</sup> Ibid, p.90

<sup>183</sup> Ibid, p.91

carries nevertheless remain hard to distinguish, and this is also reflected in the way the use of the term appears in this dissertation; though referring alternatively to descriptions of the 'nation-state', it carries with it descriptions of the 'cultural' activity of the people, in this case the 'musical culture'.

The association of culture with the nation and, consequently, the nation-state has also been discussed by Stokes, who also acknowledges the difficulty in their distinction due to their historical development which is connected. Stokes cites Weiner when he writes that: '[c]ulture is no longer a place or a group to be studied. Culture, as it is being used by many others, is about political rights and nation-building. It is also about attempts by third-world groups to fight off the domination of transnational economic politics that destroy these emergent rights as they establish their own nation-states'.<sup>184</sup> According to Cvetkovitch and Kellner, culture 'has been precisely the particularizing, localizing force that distinguished societies and people from each other', 'provided forms of local identities, practices, and modes of everyday life that could serve as a bulwark against the invasion of ideas, identities, and forms of life extraneous to the specific local region in question'.<sup>185</sup> Nonetheless, what Cvetkovitch and Kellner fail to evoke with their argument is further evident when they suggest that it is in the recent past that culture is being challenged due to the rise of the globalization process. This argument is not easy to accept, since it is doubtful whether any culture had developed as a historic unity unaffected by external influences. In fact, it is important to realize that no culture can be seen as a pre-fixed, homogeneous terrain, and that cultures are and always have been permeated by internal and external influences and keep developing in this way over time. Only by bearing this in mind shall we be able to make sense of what might be understood by the idea of an authentic means of expression for any given culture affected by imported musical idioms. However, the unquestioned acceptance of the above position would lead to an oversimplified idea that only presents part of the argument. The flip side of the coin is that, though cultures might be susceptible to constant change, they do nonetheless develop elements that are specific to them which then become fixed and

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<sup>184</sup> Annette B. Weiner as cited in Martin Stokes, 'Talk and text: popular music and ethnomusicology' in *Analysing Popular Music*, Allan F. Moore (ed.), (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp.225-227

<sup>185</sup> Cvetkovitch and Kellner, p.8

representative of the culture in question, and are not easily displaced; you might say that they enter the collective memory. These elements, as Crothers also suggests, include ‘group attitudes about right and wrong, moral and immoral, language and gibberish, or any other feature of a particular culture’.<sup>186</sup> It is within and in relation to these more stable elements of cultures that the ground on which the initial contact with, and the gradual assimilation of, a foreign idiom can take place; and since these fixed elements cannot now be swept away by a new order, they thus remain through their interaction with the new and act reciprocally for the development of further new idioms. As Crothers puts it, ‘[c]ultures simply are not fixed or immutable. They change over time and yet usually retain a sufficiently distinctive character that members of particular communities still think of themselves as “American” or “French” or “Thai”’.<sup>187</sup> In addition, cultures always define themselves in relation to other, ‘alien’ cultures; for this reason, as Crothers argues, any change that occurs within a culture as a result of the interaction with a different culture can be seen as the result of external forces, and also creates cultural tensions and negative feelings to the ‘outsiders’ if the cultural change results in something that local people consider unsuitable for their own cultural expression.<sup>188</sup> It has to be acknowledged that the speed of such cultural dialogues increased considerably in the post-war years (and kept increasing to an extent that today has reached an indescribable pace); this, as has been emphasized several times in this chapter, is the result of further developments in technology and communications media. What has changed during the period of globalization is that the advancement and easy availability of technological means allow for information to travel at ever greater speed and in many directions at once. Admittedly, it is the most powerful centres that have the greatest reach, but still, this is not to deny that everything they transmit will go on to be authentically taken up (though not everything they transmit can).

There are widely differing positions on ‘authenticity’ in relation to different nations/cultures. Bruno Nettl (1973), for example, makes the claim that every culture ‘has a primordial musical style of its own, and that songs and traits learned at a later time in its

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<sup>186</sup> Crothers, p.11

<sup>187</sup> Ibid, p.191

<sup>188</sup> Ibid, p.186

history are not properly part of its music.’<sup>189</sup> He goes on: ‘An authentic song is thought to be one truly belonging to the people who sing it, one that really reflects their spirit and personality.’<sup>190</sup> If one were to accept this position fully, then that would mean that no musical style today could be considered as authentic, as we are constantly faced with transnational musical interchanges, borrowings and re-appropriations. However, Nettl’s argument dates from 1973, and indeed, many scholars have approached issues of authenticity and national identity differently in more recent years, not least in recognition of the worldwide cultural developments that resulted in several international cultural idioms, of which rock music is one of the most important. Peterson, for example, building on Maurice Halbwachs’ argument, suggests that ‘authenticity is not inherent in the object or event that is designated authentic but it is a socially agreed-upon construct in which the past is to a degree misremembered.’<sup>191</sup> I argue that if Peterson’s argument is taken a step further, then it could be suggested that this partial misremembering of the past which is seen here as an element of ‘authenticity’ simultaneously shows that authentic music cannot be confined to the shared experience of a culture as a narrow group. This is because the shared history and, in effect, the past musical traits used as evidence of the culture’s identity are constantly reshaped and re-arranged, affected by social developments, and by borrowings from other cultures. In this sense it can be argued that there can be constant appropriations of idioms of one culture by representatives of another culture, and as is to be seen in the course of this dissertation, these borrowings and appropriations might be regarded as leading to examples of ‘authenticity’.

Young also makes a similar point, writing that the position that ‘works by outsiders will have observable aesthetic flaws’ is fuelled from ‘the premiss that the ability to use a style successfully is linked to membership in a culture.’<sup>192</sup> Young names this position (the ‘claim that artists who engage in cultural appropriation will produce flawed works’) the *aesthetic handicap thesis*, and in his article he makes some very important distinctions between two different modes of ‘cultural appropriation’. He does accept that

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<sup>189</sup> Bruno Nettl, as cited in Charles Hamm, *Putting Popular Music in its Place*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p.15

<sup>190</sup> Ibid

<sup>191</sup> Richard A. Peterson, *Creating Country Music: Fabricating Authenticity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), p.5

<sup>192</sup> James O. Young, ‘Art, Authenticity and Appropriation’ in *Frontiers of Philosophy in China*, 1/3 (September, 2006), p.459



there are cases of cultural appropriation that result in mere imitation and cannot be seen as ‘authentic’ works, and names those ‘non-innovative culture appropriations’.<sup>193</sup> Laing presents a similar case when he comments on the often used view that artists from other cultures inevitably deal with ‘second-rate material’ and this makes them ‘copyists’. The justification for this argument is, according to Laing, that ‘their own national culture does not contain the right cultural or sub-cultural soil in which rock and reggae can grow’.<sup>194</sup> On the other hand, Young simultaneously argues that there can also be ‘innovative culture appropriation’, where artists ‘appropriate a style or a motif from a culture but use it in a way that would not be used in the culture in which it originated.’<sup>195</sup>

It would be an oversimplification to state here that all the popular music in the world today is a product of what Young names ‘innovative culture appropriation’ but it could be suggested that a great part of it is. To support this argument I will use Frith’s suggestion, which is also followed by Malm and Willis and is mentioned by Cloonan, that national popular music is considered to be ‘a form of Anglo-American music which has been given a particular local twist’.<sup>196</sup> In sharing this position, I argue that this ‘local twist’ is the element that allows for the ‘authenticity’ that any given musical style (regardless of origin) made in any country can achieve. Additionally, as Frith again argues, one has to keep in mind the postmodern point that ‘we live in an age of plunder in which musics made in one place for one reason can be immediately appropriated in another place for quite another reason [...] while music may be *shaped* by the people who first make and use it, as experience it has a life of its own’,<sup>197</sup> something that would give it the ability to be adapted and rearranged.

According to Cloonan, while the construction of national identity through music is used as an idea mostly related to folk and classical music, pop is also often seen as having ‘the capacity to say something about the particular Nation-State from which it allegedly sprung’.<sup>198</sup> Having said that, it is important also to point out that, even though popular music’s roots can be derivatives of a very particular culture, it can still be

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<sup>193</sup> Ibid, p.458

<sup>194</sup> Dave Laing, ‘“Sadness”, Scorpions and Single Markets: National and Transnational Trends in European Popular Music’ in *Popular Music*, 11/2/ (May, 1992), p.135

<sup>195</sup> James O. Young, p.458

<sup>196</sup> Cloonan (1999), p.205 (n.5)

<sup>197</sup> Frith (2003), p.109

<sup>198</sup> Cloonan (1999), p.201

considered as able to express the aspirations of a different culture. Additionally, as Cloonan suggests, popular musicians ‘have been said to encapsulate something about the nation’.<sup>199</sup> I suggest that the case for anglo-american music given a particular local twist by the location in which it is produced can also valuably be taken in relation to the notion of ‘popular intonation’, as proposed by Vladimir Zak. Zak writes:

Certainly, the very existence of the popular song is unthinkable beyond the national mould (as historically conditioned), or beyond the particular social reality. Of course, no matter how similar yet separate those and other melodic contours from different national cultures would seem to be, all are fundamentally different in the context of the integral perception of the given composition, and by no means from the viewpoint of national specificity alone. It is psychologically impossible to imagine a melody attaining socially firm ground without having its unique identification marks created by the very epoch, and the particular artistic task that fed the artist’s imagination. Popular intonation demonstrates these simple truths to a remarkable extent.<sup>200</sup>

Zak’s position – that it is impossible for a song, or a piece of music or, perhaps, any work of art, regardless of its style or the origins of its genre, to be created without containing elements of the national culture in which it has originated, as it is unavoidably informed by its creator’s ‘epoch’ and the social and historical conditions that surround it – encapsulates to a large extent my conception of how ‘national identity’ can be ever-present in cultural creation, even unintentionally.

## **In conclusion**

The focus of this dissertation is the assimilation of rock idioms by European countries and their use as an authentic element of the national popular music vernacular in a way that justifies their consistency with the music’s national identity. I argue that, since music is the expression of a group and a means to provide the group with a sense of identity and unity through cultural activity, then if a style of music is proved adequate to do this within a national context (regardless of the music’s origins), and since authenticity is a ‘socially agreed-upon construct’, then the music can be considered as authentic and

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<sup>199</sup> Ibid, p.203

<sup>200</sup> Vladimir Zak, ‘The Wondrous World of Popular Intonation’ in *Popular Music Perspectives: papers from the Second International Conference on Popular Music Studies, Reggio Emilia, September 19-24, 1983*, David Horn (ed.), (Göteborg, Exeter etc.: IASPM, 1985/ distributed by Salisbury: May & May Ltd.), p.69

aligned with the sense of national identity. At this point, I would like to stress that my persistence in focusing on the concepts of ‘nation’ and ‘national popular music’ does not need to be seen as lack of awareness of the equally important division of different localities within a nation. However, in my decision to pursue a comparative study of five European countries – and this always with reference to the USA – I had to recognize the fact that even if musical artifacts from a specific city or location might indeed have a distinctive sound, they nonetheless play their part in representing a ‘national popular music’ when put next to, or gazed at from the position of, the ‘Other’. A rock band that is based in Milan might be producing a ‘Milanese’ sound for a listener in Rome, but for a Greek audience it will always be representative of ‘Italian’ rock. Whether the band’s use of rock idioms is authentic and aligned with the authentic national popular music of Italy is something that will be considered in the following chapters.

It is clear that, in order to conduct a comparative study of five European countries in the way I attempt here, many different and complex conditions (musical as well as social, political, technological, and economic) need to be taken into account. Earlier in this chapter I offered an initial discussion of the music that is the key focus of this study: rock’n’roll, and what it involves. A consideration of the popular music contexts of Britain, France, Germany, Greece, and Italy aside from rock’n’roll followed, in order to show the differences between American rock’n’roll and what were considered to be the ‘national’ popular music idioms of these countries at the time. In doing so, I have set the scene for my main argument. In the course of this chapter I have also reviewed key ideas surrounding the political readings of popular music, something that raised the need for further clarification of the concepts of Americanization, globalization, and the role of the nation-state. Also fundamental to the setting up of my thesis have been complex ideas of national identity, authenticity, and authentic national expression which are the leading theoretical concepts for this project. This chapter therefore serves as the contextual and conceptual framework that underpins this dissertation. I shall now turn to the discussion of the process of assimilation as this is suggested in this study, by initially considering the early stages of rock’n’roll in Britain, France, Germany, Greece, and Italy during the years of the ‘reception period’.

## **Part II**

## **Chapter 3**

### **‘Let’s get it started in here!’: Reception (ca.1956-1962)**

Part I of this dissertation laid down the basis on which to build the account of the process of assimilation of rock musical idioms in Europe. In this chapter I turn to a consideration of the first period of the assimilation process, the years of ‘reception’, and discuss the first encounter of these European countries with rock’n’roll, the first fascination of their youth audiences with what was still a new musical fad, the first moral panics evoked on the parts of adult society, and the first responses of the British, French, German, Greek, and Italian music industries to the American style of rock’n’roll. Nevertheless, as suggested in the previous chapter, none of the processes that surround any of the phases to be discussed in the present and following chapters is entirely free from underlying notions of political and sociological readings of the relationship of each of these countries to the USA, as well as with their image of their own ideal societies. These tensions manifest themselves in more straightforward ways in the period discussed in this chapter, during the reception of rock’n’roll, which takes place in the post-war years at a time when European countries were trying to rebuild politically, economically, socially, and emotionally by redefining their nationhood and re-acquiring their sense of national pride. The efforts of the European countries in these terms are always to be seen in relation to the superpower that the USA had become during these years, and its constant presence as a dominant world power: physically (the presence of American GIs in each of these countries), economically (financial aid the Marshall Plan), and culturally (particularly as American popular culture in all its forms).

Indeed, by the mid-1950s a new European reality was being revealed that had much to do with American involvement in the new world politics, and the relationship of specific European countries to the USA, particularly in view of the developing conflicts of the cold war. The situation has already been described in the Introduction, but the important facts of the time in relation to the countries considered in this dissertation need also to be kept in mind here. Among Britain, France, Germany, Greece, and Italy, the post-war experience varied; Britain was the prominent European power of the time, while

France also remained powerful after the war. Italy was also one of the important Western European nations – though to a lesser degree if compared with Britain and France. Nevertheless, the situation was very different in Greece, and, not least, in Germany. Greece was engaged in a Civil War between Left and Right in the years from 1946 and 1949, which resulted in a further worsening of the economic and psychological state of the country. At the same time, Germany at the end of the war was a nation defeated, humiliated, and, most importantly, divided. Initially separated into four different spheres of joint control (American, British, French, and Soviet) it would eventually result in two sovereign states, both established in 1949 – the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany, the BRD) and the German Democratic Republic (East Germany, the DDR). Germany, more eagerly than the rest of the countries this dissertation is dealing with, was a nation in pursuit of its ‘German-ness’, which started taking a different shape in each of the two German states. This obsession with identity is touched upon by writers like Uta Poiger<sup>1</sup> and Ulrich Adelt. The latter, drawing on Kattago, writes: ‘The destruction of Hitler’s Germany led the now divided nation into an obsession with its own burdened past and strategies ranging from historicization and therapeutic mourning to normalization’.<sup>2</sup> As Calvocoressi summarizes the situation, the first post-war decade closed with NATO (set up in 1949) extending American help all over Western Europe, with Britain established as the most effective and powerful of the European members of the alliance, and an emerging German state, West Germany, entering the committee of Western Europe.<sup>3</sup>

American soldiers were stationed in all five of these European countries, and the GIs, as they were known, carried their home culture with them, their orchestras, bands, and also their radio station, American Forces Network. The presence of the GIs during this period is important both in the sense of the transmission of cultural products, and also in the projection of an image of America to Europeans – and the GIs were themselves the immediate embodiment of such an image. As Richard Pells puts it:

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<sup>1</sup> Poiger (i) (2000)

<sup>2</sup> Ulrich Adelt, “‘Ich bin der Rock’n’Roll-Übermensch’: Globalization and Localization in German Music Television’ in *Popular Music and Society*, 28/3 (2005), p.285

<sup>3</sup> Calvocoressi, p.161

For many Western Europeans during and after World War II, America's foreign policy and its culture was personified by the American army. The ubiquitous GI was often the first American most people in Britain, France, Italy or Germany had ever met, the first American whose behavior they were able to observe at close range. The encounter was not necessarily pleasant. American soldiers – tossing chewing gum and chocolates to the natives, trading stockings and cigarettes for women's favors, threatening to flatten pedestrians as they roared through town in their Jeeps and luxuriously upholstered cars, noisily invading the neighbourhood pubs, bulging with dollars to squander on the black market – aroused among their European hosts a mixture of feelings, from fascination to exasperation to envy. As they swaggered down the street, brimming with health and confidence, looking larger than life and certainly more robust than the local population, the soldiers seemed the embodiments of a vulgar, flamboyant, mythological America.<sup>4</sup>

Understanding the Europeans' position towards the Americans after the war, with reference to the image of American wealth created through contact with American GIs, is to understand the encounter with the 'Other's' prosperity and advancement during a period when the Europeans themselves were struggling to improve their economic status, while at the same time seeking to preserve their cultural heritage and to redefine their national identity. Indeed, as Pells argues, by the 1950s, Britain, France, Italy, and West Germany were making efforts to promote their own cultures by emphasizing the contrast between the cultural values of Europe as these are historically evident in art, literature, music and philosophy, and what was seen as American culture, dominated by a mass culture reliant on technology and profit.<sup>5</sup> At the same time Greece and East Germany were going through somewhat different processes. Greece, further scarred by a civil war, and also a nation unlikely to be considered as one of the major Western European nations (either in geographical or in cultural terms) was not involved in cultural promotion of any kind. East Germany, on the other hand, was restricted by the burden of Stalin's authoritarian control of the Eastern bloc, and was busy attempting to define itself as culturally different and superior to West Germany. The rapid technological developments in the advancement of the media industries that were evident during this period, along with the ability to take advantage of these due to the generous but double-edged provision of American financial aid, enabled the transmission of (mostly American) cultural products and information in these countries. Soon, as is to be discussed later in more detail, the social and economic conditions in each country began to change as to further

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<sup>4</sup> Pells (1997), p.40

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, p.83

favour the reception of these American transmissions. For example, Voice of America, Radio in the American Sector (RIAS), and Radio Free Europe, all reached big audiences and were directly related to and supported by the USA and constituted important channels for the transmission of jazz and rock'n'roll in Europe.<sup>6</sup>

As discussed in Chapter 2, rock'n'roll had already become a successful musical style and a highly marketable cultural commodity in the USA by 1955, and it was now – thanks to the rapid technological development of the mass media during the war (for example, radio, film and, in particular, magnetic recording tape) – ready to make its presence felt on the other side of the Atlantic. It is this that marks the beginning of the reception period in Europe for what became rock'n'roll. For my purposes in this chapter, the 'reception period' can be chronologically placed roughly between the years 1956 and 1962 (it varies slightly for each country, due to various 'local' factors). However, this is a period that carries more obvious similarities than stark discontinuities in the countries in question. It is the period when American rock'n'roll was the unique point of reference and the sole influence for the emergence of rock music in each country. And although in these years the production of rock'n'roll started taking place at a national level in each of the countries under consideration these are not to be regarded as representative of the imitation period. As will be made clear below, the imitations/covers/copies of American rock'n'roll during this period should mostly be seen as anodyne efforts to copy a musical style that is successful somewhere else and for the moment appears to be being taken up in these European countries as a fad.

### **'Pleased to meet you...where you from? And what's your name?': The first encounter with rock'n'roll**

It is not easy to locate the specific moment when rock'n'roll made its appearance in each of the European countries under discussion here. Although American soldiers were stationed in each country, with their bands and radio stations, myth has it that rock'n'roll had officially entered these countries with Bill Haley and the Comets' 'Rock Around the Clock', the soundtrack of the film *Blackboard Jungle*, which was screened in all the countries this dissertation is dealing with between late 1955 and early 1956. The

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid, p.85



production, screening and huge popularity of the film *Rock Around the Clock* soon afterwards consolidated in many respects the close relationship between cinema and rock'n'roll, especially during the early years of rock music.<sup>7</sup> Moreover, cinema, apart from being the medium through which rock'n'roll made its essential appearance in countries outside the USA, it also kept enhancing not only the spread of the musical style, but also the lifestyle and fashion industry that surrounded rock'n'roll stars and fans.<sup>8</sup> In Britain, France, Italy, Greece, and West Germany rock'n'roll was tightly connected to cinema – and *Blackboard Jungle* in particular – while East German youth could access it by visiting West Germany's movie theatres, since this kind of cultural consumption was at that stage impossible in East Germany itself. The reason for this is the fact that, as Poiger informs us, briefly before rock'n'roll made its appearance in Germany, a youth protection law was established in East Germany with the aim to protect East German youth from the 'American way of life' through excluding American influences within its borders.<sup>9</sup> This, however, was not achievable at that time since, before the Berlin Wall was built in August 1961, people were able to travel to both sides of the divided Berlin, and the influx of American goods that West Berlin experienced with the occupation of the Allies and its open market was not restricted to West Germany alone; East German youth, by visiting West Berlin were exposed to American movies, music, and fashion.<sup>10</sup>

At the same time, the American forces radio station, AFN, was able to reach a big percentage of the radio listeners in each country; speaking for West Germany and many parts of East Germany, Richard Helt stresses the fact that the more popular rock'n'roll became in the US, the more time was devoted to transmissions of it on AFN, whereas the

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<sup>7</sup> Gundle, p.371 (*Rock Around the Clock* (1956), again screened in all five countries apart from East Germany, was a film that was centred on rock'n'roll as such, featuring many rock'n'roll performers like Bill Haley and the Comets, The Platters, as well as Alan Freed.)

<sup>8</sup> There is no space here for an extensive discussion of the relationship between cinema and rock'n'roll, but the important connection between the two during this period can be seen in, among others, Adam Trainer, 'Rock'n'Roll Cinema', *Doctoral Thesis for School of Media, Communication and Culture, Murdoch University*, 2005, <http://researchrepository.murdoch.edu.au/364/2/02Whole.pdf> (accessed 23/08/2013); Lawrence Grossberg, 'The media economy of rock culture: cinema, post-modernity and authenticity' in *Sound and Vision: The Music Video Reader*, Simon Frith, Andrew Goodwin, Lawrence Grossberg (eds.), (Oxon: Routledge, 1993), pp.185-209; John Mundy, *Popular Music on Screen: From Hollywood Musical to Music Video*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), pp.105-123; R. Serge Denisoff and William D. Romanowski, *Risky Business: Rock in Film*, (New Jersey: Transaction Publishers, 1991)

<sup>9</sup> Poiger (i) (2000), p.67

<sup>10</sup> Ibid, p.208

fact that the list of songs was often updated according to the American charts meant that listeners could pick up the very latest crazes.<sup>11</sup> This, of course, applied to all countries where GIs were stationed. Needless to repeat, the historical conditions that led to the ‘birth’ of rock’n’roll and its initial transmission allowed the idiom to reach British, French, German, Greek, and Italian audiences easily, but did not necessarily presuppose the explosive development that the music would undergo in each of the countries considered here (as well as, indeed, the rest of the world). One of the factors that allowed the beginning of such a process was the decidedly shifting social and economic conditions in these European countries (still damaged by the world war) during this period of rock’n’roll’s reception, and their transformation into more affluent and consumerist societies that also saw the rise of a youth culture and of the teenager as a separate social and consumer group.

**‘Now when the seasons change, oh we don’t stay the same’: social changes, economic developments and the rise of the teenager in Europe**

Rock’n’roll as a musical style was created in the USA, crudely as market product that came about from the hybridization of several music styles of both african-american and European descent, and was aimed primarily at the American youth market, comprised of teenagers who were growing up in a specific social context and had acquired a newly discovered and important consumer power. Mirroring this process, and supported by American financial aid, the rise of consumerism (and specifically the teenager as a targeted consumer group) would soon be evident in Europe as well. According to Pells,

The emergence of consumerism in postwar Europe coincided with a substantial growth in personal and disposable income. In France, for example, wages rose more rapidly than the cost of living during the 1950s, leading to a sharp increase in purchasing power. Consumption was additionally stimulated by an expansion of credit and by people’s willingness to go into debt to buy what they wanted. Similar developments occurred in Britain, Italy, and especially West Germany. As a result, Western Europeans began to spend less of their money on basic necessities like food, clothing, and shelter, and proportionally more on such “luxuries” as new furniture, electrical appliances, crystal and

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<sup>11</sup> Richard C. Helt, ‘A German bluegrass festival: the “country-boom” and some notes on the history of American popular music in West Germany’ in *The Journal of Popular Culture*, X (Spring 1977), p.823

china, high-fidelity phonographs and records, television sets, and leisure wear  
– most of these made in America.<sup>12</sup>

Hence, there had been a certain affluence that favoured the increasing consumerism that in a sense cut through class boundaries for the first time in Europe – something also reflected in the way young people came to be involved in these shifting social contexts. These two social factors are specifically the ones that characterized all five European countries that this study is concerned with in the 1950s and further favoured the embrace of the rock'n'roll idiom to the extent it will be discussed in this chapter. However, this is again not a straightforward process since, whatever the apparent resemblance of the developing situation in these European countries to the American situation, there still existed a decisive difference between the two: the conditions that had enabled the birth of rock'n'roll to take place in the USA in the first place did not yet exist in the European context. The first thing to bear in mind is that these countries were still recovering from the war and were still in the process of restructuring and redefining their sense of national identity; young people as an identifiable group – their position in society and their relation to the adult world – remained as yet different in character to the world of American teenagers, while the countries we are looking at also exhibited considerable differences between one another in this respect. This distance between the American and European contexts is also to be seen in rock'n'roll itself. The style and ideology surrounding rock'n'roll – its treatment to become as 'whitened' a musical style as possible, as well as what the content of the lyrics of the songs seemed to signify for its listeners – were representative of the lives of American teenagers, who were mostly high school pupils in an affluent society where they were not subject to severe financial restrictions, unlike many of their European counterparts. The songs were about cars, love, and youthful anxieties, and presented an urge towards the celebration of youth; they called for dance, and joy, and they drew a line between the kind of American music that was enjoyed by the adult audience represented by their parents and the newly-emergent teenage musical culture. It was in many respects a sign of opposition, as a music that most parents did not understand or approve of. It was also a very profitable cultural product for the American music industry.

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<sup>12</sup> Pells (1997), p.196

When rock'n'roll first made its appearance in the European countries in question it was perfect timing in relation to the social changes that were now becoming more visible in these countries – the shift towards highly consumerist societies (East Germany, under the Soviet sphere of influence, is the only exception in these terms), and the emergence of the teenager as an important social category. Britain was experiencing an economic boom in the post-war years, one that began in the late 1940s and lasted well into the 1960s. Within this context, as Bradley points out, the low unemployment rates and the growth of wages favoured an increase of consumerism.<sup>13</sup> Bennett emphasizes that the period of affluence that Britain experienced after WWII was a result of the absence of competing exporting powers such as Germany, France, Japan, and Italy in the global market, which left room for the impressive British economic growth at the time.<sup>14</sup> This economic growth, in combination with the technological developments that allowed for the cheaper and more efficient production of goods, Bennett continues, further contributed to the rise of consumerism.<sup>15</sup> The country's economic advancement, however, as Clarke, Hall, Jefferson, and Roberts suggest, 'was constructed on very shaky foundations, "upon temporary and fortuitous circumstances" (Bogdanor and Skidelsky, eds., 1970, 8) and there was the tendency for 'promotion of private consumption at the expense of the public sector'.<sup>16</sup> In Britain, unlike in the USA, it was working-class youth that would be the moving force for the teenage market; they were the group that shared the biggest percentage of post-war cultural expenditure, since they were the ones who had an income but fewer restrictions on ways of spending it. Thus, in the absence of family responsibilities, they were more likely to 'invest' more money in the pursuit of leisure.<sup>17</sup> Britain in the late 1950s and early 1960s remained a very class-orientated society, and while there had been political attempts by the post-war Labour government at eliminating 'social divisions' in terms of education, welfare and health, seen more cynically this was also pursued in terms of market forces, where the working classes became also identified

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<sup>13</sup> Bradley (1992), p.80

<sup>14</sup> Andy Bennett, *Popular Music and Youth Culture: Music, Identity and Place* (Hampshire: Palgrave, 2000), p.12

<sup>15</sup> Ibid

<sup>16</sup> John Clarke, Stuart Hall, Tony Jefferson, Brian Roberts, 'Subcultures, cultures and class: a theoretical overview' in *Resistance through Rituals: Youth Subcultures in post-war Britain*, Stuart Hall and Tony Jefferson (London: Hutchinson Publishing Group, 1975), p.23

<sup>17</sup> Ibid, p.27

as consumers of the newly available consumer goods through hire purchase schemes. Peter Wicke makes this point powerfully: '[w]hile on the one hand British capital interests tried to solve the problems occasioned by the loss of markets and cheap labour in the former British colonies with a cynical contempt for the working classes, on the other hand they promoted a "classless" consumer paradise, a superb screen for the genuine interests of capital'.<sup>18</sup> The political aim of the times was to portray the British nation as 'a single community, held together by the common aim of increasing prosperity'.<sup>19</sup> The efforts of making Britain a nation with no divisions is also manifested by the introduction of secondary education for everyone, and the massive extension of higher education.<sup>20</sup>

Although the situation as described might seem idyllic for the new teenager music consumers, Harker presents the other side of the story. As he says, contrary to general belief, British youth between the years 1959 and 1962 did not have an easy access to entertainment; age restrictions did not allow under 18s to enter bars or clubs, and the only alternative to the streets (apart from the youth clubs that were being 'run on what felt like semi-military lines') were coffee bars and cinemas. If a teenager was not living in a major city, did not play a musical instrument, could not afford to buy a record player and records, and did not have transportation that would allow them move to places where music could be 'consumed', things that most probably were the case for the majority of British youth, then they experienced what Harker calls a musical 'desert'.<sup>21</sup> Nevertheless, this seems to apply particularly to night-time live music entertainment; rock'n'roll could still be heard through records and transistor radios, whereas jukeboxes were situated in public places like coffee bars where teenagers had access.

In France the aforementioned social changes are encountered slightly later; as Prévost argues, the year 1958 marked both the beginning of the Fifth Republic in the country (with General Charles de Gaulle) and also the end of its post-war period. It is in this context that French society started to change drastically<sup>22</sup> and an ideal context was

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<sup>18</sup> Wicke (1990), p.60

<sup>19</sup> Ibid

<sup>20</sup> Clarke, Hall, Jefferson and Roberts, p.20

<sup>21</sup> Dave Harker, *One for the Money: Politics and Popular song* (London: Hutchinson, 1980), p.73

<sup>22</sup> André J. M. Prévost, 'Popular Music' in *Handbook of French Popular Culture*, Pierre L. Horn (ed.), (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1991), p.190

now created in France, as elsewhere, for the emergence of the late 1950s image of the ‘teenager’. As Looseley points out, this context arose from a combination of the following factors: during this period of industrial recovery in France and the transformation of its economy into one dominated by consumerism, the school leaving age was raised from fourteen to sixteen in 1959, and higher education was expanded at around the same time.<sup>23</sup> In this sense, teenagers had more time, they were being supported financially by their parents, and were now able to invest more in the pursuit of leisure. However, as Looseley points out, French teenagers, by still being more closely controlled by the family and more attached to the values of the Catholic Church, were held back from developing ‘their own specialist tastes and rituals’ compared to their American counterparts – something that would start changing by around 1960.<sup>24</sup> Nonetheless, although an identifiable youth group was undoubtedly appearing in France at this period, no specifically French musical style accompanied the newly-developed identity of this group. This, according to Petterson, had a lot to do with the state of the *chanson*. In his words,

The relative absence of an equally explosive youth music scene in France during the late 1950s and early 1960s is explained by the strength of French *chanson* during this period. The homogeneity of *la chanson française* acted as a barrier to the heterogeneity of French youth and obstructed the development of alternative forms of French youth music, which might have been capable of dislodging the *chanson*, this active symbol of monoculturalism. Thus, in the 1950s, French song persisted in its homogeneity at a time when rock’n’roll was perceived as a transcultural, transclass, polysemic, and dialogical message in other industrially advanced nations. Yet the monoculturalism of French *chanson* also served as a catalyst, encouraging French youth to turn to non-Francophone forms of music.<sup>25</sup>

It is in relation to this contradiction, as will be made clear later, that rock both acted and reacted in France.

Rock’n’roll entered Italy, on the other hand, at a time when the political and social situation in the country was still very unsettled in the aftermath of the war. As

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<sup>23</sup> David Looseley (2), p.23

<sup>24</sup> Ibid

<sup>25</sup> James Petterson, ‘No more song and dance: French radio quotas, *chansons*, and cultural exceptions’ in *Transactions, Transgression, Transformations: American Culture in Western Europe and Japan*, Heide Fehrenbach and Uta G. Poiger (eds.), (New York: Berghahn Books, 2000), p.118

Gundle suggests, the election of the Christian Democrats in 1948 was followed by a period of economic recovery which, while politically conservative, was nevertheless open towards American culture and consumerism.<sup>26</sup> The economic growth of Italy met its peak between the years 1958-63, a period known as the ‘economic miracle’; during these years, Gundle claims, Italy had been especially receptive of American cultural products.<sup>27</sup> This receptivity, however, was not unproblematic; according to Gundle, the influence of catholicism was always striving to contain the influence of America and its ‘propaganda’ in favour of the benefits of growth: ‘the ruling forces in society always tried to marry new ideas of prosperity to conventional values and practices’.<sup>28</sup> This was also the time when Italy saw *i giovani* (the youth) as a rising social group.<sup>29</sup> Italian youth, like teenagers in other countries, was drawn towards a mixture of American, British, and French imports, and shared a common fashion sense and code of behaviour, with its own meeting places (the jukebox bars), and its own communication tools.<sup>30</sup>

Nonetheless, as Fiori suggests, working-class people in Italy, who were still ‘tied to the idea of a peasant-type austerity’ and who still did not earn enough to be able to buy records and record-players in the 1950s, were not very familiar with rock, unlike their equivalent in other Western countries. Thus rock’n’roll was initially a music more associated with communication between students, and it was students and middle-class teenagers who initially helped the culture spread.<sup>31</sup> Hence, it was not only the working class youth who had taken up rock’n’roll, but especially middle-class youth, mostly secondary school pupils, although the latter tended to avoid the dress style that characterized working class rock fans.<sup>32</sup> Whether a total separation of the two is really possible, however, is open to debate. According to Gundle, the particular ‘historic influence of the Catholic Church’, and ‘the absence of ethnic diversity and of a real

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<sup>26</sup> Gundle, p.369

<sup>27</sup> Ibid

<sup>28</sup> Ibid, p.370

<sup>29</sup> Franco Minganti, ‘Jukebox boys: postwar Italian music and the culture of covering’ in *Transactions, Transgression, Transformations: American Culture in Western Europe and Japan*, Heide Fehrenbach and Uta G. Poiger (eds.), (New York: Berghahn Books, 2000), p.149

<sup>30</sup> Ibid, p.150

<sup>31</sup> Fiori (1984), p.263

<sup>32</sup> Gundle, p.372



tradition of individual dissent' are social factors to be seen as influencing the initial Italian response to the rock culture.<sup>33</sup>

Similarly, rock'n'roll entered West Germany during a time of 'expansion of welfare state' and 'material prosperity', as Bullivant and Rice point out when speaking about the 1950s in West Germany.<sup>34</sup> Kellner and Soeffner maintain that no more than a decade after the war, West Germany was experiencing 'the German Economic Miracle'.<sup>35</sup> All in all, there was a rise in consumerism, which, as in other countries to a greater or lesser extent, allowed for a bigger expenditure on leisure and culture. West Germany would appear to have been more receptive towards rock'n'roll due to its close political alliance with the USA which allowed for the easy importation and wide consumption of American culture. Whether this was something acceptable to West German society as a whole or not is something that will be discussed later in this chapter. In stark contrast to this, rock'n'roll was encountered with hostility in East Germany, its importation and consumption was not allowed by the government in the GDR – as was the case with everything else American. Nonetheless, as will be seen later in more detail, East German youth was always able to find ways to develop their affinities with the emerging culture of rock'n'roll on the other side of the border.

Greece followed the rest of these countries in Western Europe in terms of economic advancement, but with a short time-lag. In the 1950s Greece was still suffering the destructions of the civil war (1946-1949). This partly separates Greece during the first rock'n'roll years from the other countries under discussion here, in the sense that due to the economic situation in Greece during the 1950s not everyone could afford records and record players. This, according to Mpozinis, was the reason why the first years of rock consumption in the country were based on a collective attitude of gatherings at specific houses for listening to records, or organizing with friends the purchase of a new record.<sup>36</sup> As Mpozinis notes, in 1950s in Greece there were efforts to confront the ruins of the war,

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid, p.369

<sup>34</sup> Keith Bullivant and C. Jane Rice, 'Reconstruction and Integration: The Culture of West German Stabilization 1945 to 1968' in *German Cultural Studies: An Introduction*, Burns, Rob (ed.), (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), p.231

<sup>35</sup> Hansfried Kellner and Hans-Georg Soeffner, 'Cultural globalization in Germany' in *Many Globalizations: Cultural Diversity in the Contemporary World*, Berger, Peter L. and Huntington, Samuel P. (eds.), (New York: Oxford University Press), p.122

<sup>36</sup> Mpozinis, p.174



unemployment, migration, the state authority and a strict political and ideological climate, systematically supported by the police.<sup>37</sup> The circumstances were even harder for the younger generation, a big part of which did not attend secondary school because of the need to work. At the same time, there was a rapid but insufficient industrial and economic rate of development. This had as a result a large movement of population from the country to the city, a period of intense industrialization, and an increasing gap between traditional ways of life and the demands of modernization and urban living. All this favoured a demand for change and progress at a time when there was also a persistent attachment to the traditional models of culture promoted both by the state, and also by the official media.<sup>38</sup>

In short, during the 1950s all the countries in question were experiencing an industrial recovery, economic growth, and the rise of consumerism. Additionally, in all of these countries the image of the ‘teenager’ became apparent, a term that was invented in the USA in the late 1940s and early 1950s<sup>39</sup> and which initially came to be seen as connected to delinquent behaviour. This was also followed by a further rise of interest in American cultural products that during these years were imported into these countries, mostly because of the rise of consumerism, but also because of the fact that the new youth culture started drawing on the example of the lifestyle of American youth. Most obvious was the enthusiastic engagement with rock’n’roll by European youth. This tendency, however, is not straightforward. The fact is that, despite any superficial similarities, the social circumstances of the countries in question were still vastly different from those in the USA, and this meant that a chasm existed in understanding the way rock’n’roll music operated in its original context, not to mention the difficulty for audiences in France, Germany, Greece, and Italy to understand the meaning of rock’n’roll songs due to linguistic barriers. At the moment of rock’n’roll’s reception, English was not yet standard in compulsory education in any of the countries in question. Writing on the situation in Italy – but in this case it is an argument that transcends borders– Minganti proposes that it was their limited knowledge of the English language that led European teenagers to adjust the ‘message’ of these songs to ‘their expectations

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid, p.256

<sup>38</sup> Ibid, p.268

<sup>39</sup> Bradley, p.84

and fantasies'.<sup>40</sup> Nonetheless, especially during the reception period, this linguistic barrier did not deprive teenagers of their enthusiasm for rock'n'roll culture.

One thing that created a certain controversy in each country was the preference of the newly emergent group of teenagers for the consumption of anything that was American. In this sense, many saw the rise of teenagers as a consequence of American influence. Nevertheless, it was the larger social and economic changes that set the ground for the teenager image to emerge in each country, and not only the influence of American culture as such. The fact that the time of the appearance of both rock'n'roll and the image of the teenager coincided is mostly to be seen as a coincidence that would make both more powerful as phenomena in their combination. In Eyerman's words,

[s]ocial science discovered youth culture in the post-war period, when expanding economies in North America permitted increased consumption and a longer gap between childhood and working life [...] For the most part, youth was conceptualized as a problem from both a societal and individual perspective – a troublesome period.<sup>41</sup>

Inevitably, the rising image of teenagers in these countries and the newly-emergent youth culture became tightly connected with rock'n'roll, and, also, with youth delinquency, due to the activities of specific youth subcultures. The issue of subcultures is not directly relevant to my purposes in this study, but it cannot be denied that rock'n'roll became the musical style that 'gangs', 'delinquent groups', or subcultures, deliberately used as their preferred musical idiom. Youth subcultures existed in each country before the emergence of rock'n'roll. However, even if the 'teddy boys' of Britain and Greece, 'blousons noirs' of France, 'Halbstarken' and 'rowdies' of West and East Germany respectively, and 'teppisti' in Italy were not groups that came into being *because* of rock'n'roll, they all came at the time to be considered as products of the 'degenerate' effects of American cultural influence. The only exception in this case is Greece during the very first years of rock'n'roll reception, when American influence was not openly accused for being responsible for the delinquent behavior of young people for the reason that, as Ntaloukas suggests, up to the late 1950s, America was seen as a protective and friendly country to

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<sup>40</sup> Minganti (1993), p.142

<sup>41</sup> Ron Eyerman, 'Music in Movement: Cultural Politics and Old and New Social Movements' in *Qualitative Sociology*, 25/3 (Fall 2002), pp.443-4, n.2

Greece.<sup>42</sup> However, it has to be remembered that gangs and youth subcultures that presented delinquent behaviour comprised a minority of young people in each context, whereas rock'n'roll generated great enthusiasm for the vast majority of teenagers throughout the five countries being considered here.

We have established that the image of the teenager held a very important position in the society of each of the European countries in question at this period. We shall now turn to discuss the position of adults and the official culture in each country with regard to the connection between teenagers and their new power as consumers: we are interested in the way these are projected on to the consumption of American cultural idioms and, more particularly, rock'n'roll.

### **'...daddy please stop yelling...': rock'n'roll and 'moral panics'**

Although, as we are to see later, rock'n'roll had already begun being taken up by the record industries of these five European countries during these years, this needs to be seen mainly as a purely profit-making venture stemming from the realization of the commercial potential of these new trends. It should not be seen as a generally positive attitude towards the music on the part of the adult community, the official state media, and the authorities within each of these countries, where neither the music nor its associated lifestyle were approved of. In fact, in every context we are looking at, rock'n'roll had initially created moral panic, defined by Clarke, Hall, Jefferson, and Roberts as 'a spiral in which social groups who perceive their world and position as threatened, identify a "responsible enemy", and emerge as the vociferous guardians of traditional values: moral entrepreneurs'.<sup>43</sup> Rock'n'roll was not unique in causing this reaction on the part of adults and the cultured elite. Richard Hoggart saw the 'newer mass arts' in which he included 'sex-and-violence novels', 'spicy magazines', 'commercial popular songs', and the 'juke-box' as threatening for British cultural identity.<sup>44</sup> The fear of Americanization presented in Hoggart's stance, and relevant arguments of the post-war years, represent, as Strinati argues, 'fears about the threat posed to traditional elites and

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<sup>42</sup> Ntaloukas, p.120 (n.83)

<sup>43</sup> Clarke, Hall, Jefferson and Roberts, p.72

<sup>44</sup> Strinati, p.64

intellectuals by the “levelling down process””.<sup>45</sup> I suggest that the attitude that becomes evident in all the countries in question can be seen in relation to rock’n’roll to have three main aspects: juvenile delinquency, disruption of gender norms, and sensuality as expressed through ‘primitive’ physicality. I shall now consider each of these in a little more detail.

### *Juvenile delinquency*

Groups of teenagers whose behaviour was considered as incompatible with acceptable social norms were to be found in all five countries we are looking at here; it was particularly during this period that these groups became more visible because of the increasing power of teenagers as consumers. The emergence of a ‘youth culture’, a result of economic and media changes, also revealed, according to Clarke, Hall, Jefferson, and Roberts, the effects of the war on children who were born and raised during these years: the absence of their fathers, the experience of evacuation, the break-up of family life, and the encounter with violence could all be seen as additional factors contributing to the “‘new” juvenile delinquency of the mid-1950s.”<sup>46</sup> Youth misbehavior was in many cases encountered with hostility on the part of the authorities and the adults, who sometimes went to extremes in order to confront the phenomenon. Nowhere is the opposition between the state and the ‘delinquents’ more straightforward during this time than in Greece. In fact, when a young person was considered to be manifesting inappropriate behaviour (not having a decent appearance in school, going in night clubs, approaching a female school, smoking etc.) they could face strict punishment, often with the intervention of the police. The Greek delinquents were given the name ‘teddy boys’, used with offensive and shameful connotations to describe any inappropriate behaviour,<sup>47</sup> the name having been taken from the British working class youth of the time. The most typical action of the teddy boys was throwing yogurt at people, something very prominent between the years 1958 to 1960 most commonly at the American soldiers (out of jealousy), rich people, foreigners. At this period in Greece, the state had invested great power and authority in the police, and was not willing to tolerate such inexplicable

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid, p.66

<sup>46</sup> Clarke, Hall, Jefferson, Roberts, p.19

<sup>47</sup> Mpozinis, p.277

actions on the part of young people. Hence, in 1959, one of the harsher laws passed in Greece, the so-called '4000: On teddy-boys', that legislated a minimum of three-month's imprisonment for such infringements of public order, and such punishments were also accompanied on most occasions by public humiliation.<sup>48</sup> By 1960 the phenomenon seems to have subsided. As was the case with British teddy boys, French *blousons noirs*, German *Halbstarken*, and Italian *teppisti*, Greek teddy boys were a group of teenagers (some of whom might have been rock fans) whose behaviour might have been 'delinquent', but was by no means to be considered as representative of the general attitude of the totality of the rock youth in these five countries.

Nevertheless, rock'n'roll's supposed affinity with delinquent behavior was not confined to the subcultures, but extended to the broader audience for the music. In France, for example, according to Looseley, 'the existence of rock'n'roll became worrying in 1961, when three festivals that took place in the Palais de Sports in Paris led to expressions of violence and vandalism. Looseley writes: 'what particularly shocked the establishment (politicians and local authorities, teachers, intellectuals, parts of the press) was that such behaviour seemed woven into the very fabric of rock'n'roll, with its incomprehensible lyrics (whether in English or French) and the assorted hiccups and grunts of young male stars, sometimes dressed head to toe in black leather like Vince Taylor, who hurled themselves to their knees for no apparent purpose other than to attract attention to their pelvic girdle.'<sup>49</sup> Rock'n'roll was already considered as unsuitable and unrepresentative of French society, and it was treated with hostility by adult society, something that also applied to Italy. For Italian adults rock'n'roll was alarming; seen as sexually explicit and with the emphasis on its black roots, it was considered to be an agent of primitivism. Gundle reports that rock'n'roll in Italy caused moral panics that involved, among others, parents, schools, the Church, the police, local government,<sup>50</sup> and

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48 Ntaloukas, p.129: a teddy boy humiliation normally involved the teenager's head being shaved, their trousers being torn with scissors by the police and then being handcuffed. The punishment would be completed with hanging signs on the teenagers where the acts of which they were being accused were announced, in combination with inappropriate descriptions for the person accused. Finally, the convicted teenagers were made to walk around the streets in this state in order to be humiliated publicly.

<sup>49</sup> David Looseley (.), 'In from the margins: *chanson*, pop and cultural legitimacy' in *Popular Music in France from Chanson to Techno: Culture, Identity and Society*, Dauncey, Hugh and Cannon, Steve (eds.), (Hants: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2003), p.33

<sup>50</sup> Gundle, p.371

that, as elsewhere, the link between rock'n'roll and teenagers was seen as a social problem. In Italy, the image of the teenager was seen as manifested in the delinquency of young men in gangs, but also, as Gundle says, in the consumption habits of the youth culture as expressed through 'clothes, musical tastes, leisure activities, enthusiasm for all forms of motorized transport...'.<sup>51</sup> This behaviour was mostly evident in the urban centres where the cultural consumption of American products created, according to Stella, certain 'cosmopolitan influences' and the ideas of an imaginary identity and youth solidarity, expressed mostly through the consumption of rock'n'roll, the music of the *urlatori*, and clothes fashions like leather jackets and jeans.<sup>52</sup> According to Gundle, young people in jeans, an image typical for the American youngster, were seen as potential delinquents, and, after incidents of youth criminality in Milan which began in 1957, anyone wearing jeans was arrested and their trousers seized.<sup>53</sup> This was something that affected directly the people involved in popular music production as well. As Stella writes,

The connection between the transgressiveness of *teppisti* and pop-music (typified by a group of young singers with half-American names like Little Tony, Tony Dallara, Jenny Luna, Joe Sentieri and Mina, known in 1958 as Baby Gate), was so much insisted on that in November 1959 several of the singers met to decide whether they were prepared to accept being called "*cantautori urlatori*" (literally "screaming singers"), a name which clearly evokes ideas of agitation.<sup>54</sup>

As was evident in other countries, rock'n'roll in Germany was also linked with youth groups and juvenile delinquency. Initially, rock'n'roll music appreciation was associated with the culture of the *Halbstarken*, mainly street gangs of working class youth, though reports show that young people from all social classes were involved in the 'Halbstarke riots'. (Riots were taking place all over West Germany, manifested, for example, according to Maase, at a Bill Haley concert in Hamburg in autumn 1958, where violent

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<sup>51</sup> Ibid, p.372

<sup>52</sup> Simonetta Piccone Stella, "'Rebels without a cause': male youth in Italy around 1960" in *History Workshop Journal*, 78/1 (1994), p.163, 169

<sup>53</sup> Gundle, p.372

<sup>54</sup> Stella, pp.174-75

incidents occurred.<sup>55</sup>) Nevertheless, as Maase points out, it was young working-class men who were seen as the ‘delinquent core’.<sup>56</sup> The equivalent of *Halbstarken* in East Germany were the ‘rowdies’, who were given this label in English to dissociate them from the respectable German citizens of the GDR and in order directly to connect their unacceptable behaviour to American influence.<sup>57</sup>

### *Rock’n’Roll, Race, and Gender Norms*

It is noticeable that, more explicitly perhaps than in other countries, rock’n’roll in West Germany was ostensibly presented as dangerous because of its association with black culture – possibly a hangover from *entartete Musik* in the Third Reich. According to Poiger, ‘[r]ock’n’roll in 1950s West Germany was radical because of its associations with blackness; unlike many Americans, Germans did not perceive it as “whitened” music’.<sup>58</sup> Though this was a tendency that was not restricted to West Germany, I suggest that it is of particular significance in this case because of the associations made between what was perceived as specifically racial behaviour and ways in which this became seen through the influence of rock’n’roll, and the further threat presented by this music to the accepted gender norms of German society. I argue that because of this link made in Germany between race and gender roles via notions of sexuality that the issue that created most distress in adult society and which was also more evident in West Germany than in any other country, was the effect the new rock’n’roll music had on gender role representations. For Germans (both West and East) this new teenager identity and what it entailed came into conflict with efforts from the centre to redefine ‘German-ness’, one aspect of which was the re-establishment of the appropriate gender roles, something discussed in detail by Poiger. In short, the anxiety caused by the behaviour of female rock’n’roll fans could be seen in relation to new laws the West German authorities wanted to pass, so Poiger informs us, that would ‘legislate spousal property rights and

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<sup>55</sup> Kaspar Maase, “‘Halbstarke’ and Hegemony: Meanings of American Mass Culture in the Federal Republic of Germany during the 1950s’ in *Cultural Transmissions and Receptions: American Mass Culture in Europe*, Rob Kroes, Robert W. Rydell, Doeko F.J. Bosscher (eds.), (Amsterdam: VU University Press, 1993), p.152

<sup>56</sup> Ibid, p.160

<sup>57</sup> Poiger (i) (2000), p.85

<sup>58</sup> Poiger (1998), p.376



parental rights'. This was debated in the West German parliament and, although fundamental changes were made to the law (the so-called *Gleichberechtigungsgesetz*) in the interests of women regarding equality between women and men in the course of the 1950s, it was still assumed by all parties that a woman's place was really 'in the home'.<sup>59</sup> Bearing this in mind, it should not come as a surprise to learn that the word 'teenager' was first used in West Germany as a word for young female Germans who were embracing more modern lifestyles in terms of fashion, sex, and consumption habits, and thus ran counter to 'the traditional ideal image ... [of] self-restraint in matters of consumption and sexuality'.<sup>60</sup> The use of the term in Germany shifted dramatically within a brief period of time, so that 'by 1960 it could include both young men and young women, and it now connoted generational difference rather than conflict'.<sup>61</sup> Nonetheless, rock'n'roll music and especially its accompanying dance styles continued to be seen by West Germans as threatening the ideal image of the appropriate gender roles. As Poiger suggests, since part of the reconstruction process of West Germany was the definition of gender norms, and since part of this definition included the idea of the male role as protector, then the independence shown by female rock'n'roll fans, as seen in their dance styles (that is, they danced independently) and clothing (wearing men's clothes, like jeans and leather jackets), was a direct challenge.<sup>62</sup> One way to get around this while not being directly hostile to this troublesome American import, can be seen, as Poiger notes, in efforts like the action of the West Berlin government in the second half of the 1950s to promote 'ballroom dancing, especially in working-class neighborhoods. Subsidized lessons included instruction about correct behavior toward the opposite sex'.<sup>63</sup> The issue of 'dancing apart' was an important matter in both German states, as it was an action that was considered to have rebellious connotations due to its neglect of traditional norms. This is further seen in a similar effort on the part of East German authorities to promote a

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<sup>59</sup> Ibid, p.395

<sup>60</sup> Uta G. Poiger (2), 'American music, cold war liberalism, and German identities' in *Transactions, Transgression, Transformations: American Culture in Western Europe and Japan*, Heide Fehrenbach and Uta G. Poiger (eds.), (New York: Berghahn Books, 2000), p.137

<sup>61</sup> Ibid, p.138

<sup>62</sup> Poiger (1) (2000), p.396

<sup>63</sup> Poiger (2) (2000), p.136



dance style that would substitute for rock'n'roll dance, after the ban on 'dancing apart'.<sup>64</sup> Because of the failure of all the East German state's efforts to eliminate cultural influences of the West on its dancing styles, alternative styles of music and dance were searched for in order to attract East German youth.<sup>65</sup> Several scholars comment on these efforts (Poiger, Ryback, Maas and Reszel): in January 1959, in the process of the first national conference on 'dance music', the issue of the necessity of popular music, but also the agreement of rock music's unsuitability for the entertainment of GDR youth came up. In search of alternatives, a new, East German dance, the *Lipsi*, was introduced as a suitable indigenous popular music style. The *Lipsi* was a dance for couples that had a fast rhythm, but did not allow dancing apart.<sup>66</sup> Of course, this new dance never became popular within the GDR, and, instead, East German youth kept finding ways to dance to the rock'n'roll rhythms. The introduction of the *Lipsi* gave another opportunity to East German youth to politicize their musical preferences. In Poiger's words:

In 1959 groups of adolescents in several East German cities gave their admiration of rock'n'roll and Elvis an explicitly political twist. In two Leipzig suburbs, for example, groups gathered in the streets shouting 'We want no Lipsi and we want no Ado [*sic*] Koll, instead we want Elvis Presley and his rock'n'roll'. (Alo Koll was a Leipzig bandleader heavily promoted by authorities.) Then they apparently marched downtown expressing their disdain for the East German leadership. One of them shouted 'Long live Walter Ulbricht and the Eastern Zone [East Germany]'; the chorus answered 'Pfui, pfui' (the equivalent of booing). This was followed by 'Long live Elvis Presley'; this time the crowd responded with an enthusiastic 'Yes, Yes, Yes'.<sup>67</sup>

Poiger goes on to add that similar incidents were not restricted to Leipzig, but took place in at least thirteen other East German cities.<sup>68</sup> Indeed, in a country with the cultural background of Germany, and the importance of the respectable cultural ideal, it was not only the behaviour of rock'n'roll audiences, but also rock'n'roll performances themselves that could not easily find acceptance in terms of traditional cultural norms.<sup>69</sup> I consider

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<sup>64</sup> Ryback, p.28

<sup>65</sup> Ibid, p.29

<sup>66</sup> Poiger (i) (2000), p.185; Ryback, pp.29-30; Georg Maas and Hartmut Reszel, 'Whatever Happened to...: The Decline and Renaissance of Rock in the Former GDR' in *Popular Music*, 17/3 (October 1998), p.268

<sup>67</sup> Poiger (i) (2000), p.196

<sup>68</sup> Ibid

<sup>69</sup> Maase, p.167

that this is applied to both Germanies, East as well as West, even though Maase only discusses West Germany in these terms.<sup>70</sup>

However, it was not only female rock'n'roll consumption that alarmed adult society and the authorities in West Germany. Male rock'n'roll fans in West Germany were seen as opposing the idea of rearmament. Military conscription for men was introduced in West Germany in 1956;<sup>71</sup> Maase suggests that since the beginning of the 1950s there had been evident mass opposition to the idea of rearmament, something that was mainly expressed not through actual political action on the part of young people, but instead, through an attitude that stated 'not with me', the so-called 'Ohne-mich' movement.<sup>72</sup> This 'not with me' attitude can also be related to the culture of rock'n'roll fans', both female and male, that challenged traditional and official ideals at every opportunity.

Depending on the degree of liberty that teenagers of both genders had during this period, the participation of girls gave varying cause for alarm in each country. In an extremely conservative society like Greece, girls did participate in rock'n'roll, but were not as visible in these terms. Greek female teenagers could get involved with rock'n'roll culture with the help of their brothers, male cousins and family friends, but also through the lives and biographies of the rock idols they admired. However, in Greece, as was the case in other European countries, it was in relation to the dance styles associated with rock'n'roll that most anxiety was aroused. Together with the music and the accompanying fashion styles, Greek youth largely embraced rock'n'roll dancing, something that was strongly criticized by adults who saw in the particular dance movements an obvious sensual element. Rock'n'roll dance was for the Greek teenagers of the time a celebration of youth and an opposition to the repressive restrictions that surrounded them, as exemplified in the attachment of the adult generation to traditional ideas and the insistence on conservatism displayed by the authorities.

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<sup>70</sup> Ibid, p.156

<sup>71</sup> Bullivant and Rice, p.232

<sup>72</sup> Maase, p.153

### *Dance and Sensuality*

In all the countries discussed, one of the things that comes up again and again in establishment attitudes towards the newly emergent rock'n'roll culture is the opposition to its physical and sexual character. Associated with promiscuousness and sexuality – something further stressed in discussions about the music's african-american roots – rock'n'roll was seen as morally threatening and degenerate. Nonetheless, physical movement and dance are important elements of music listening (and music making) activities, as emphasized by much current research, but also touched upon in relation to its social function by Adorno in the early 1960s. In Adorno's words,

Music substitutes for the happening in which a man identified with music always thinks he has an active part, no matter how. And as such a substitute, in moments which popular consciousness equates with rhythm, music seems imaginatively to restore to the body some of the functions which in reality were taken from it by the machines – a kind of ersatz sphere of physical motion, in which the otherwise painfully unbridled motor energies of the young, in particular, are absorbed. In this respect the function of music today is not so very different from the self-evident and yet no less mysterious one of sports. In fact, the type of music listener with expertise on the level of physically measurable performance approximates that of the sports fan. Intensive studies of football habitués and music-addicted radio listeners might yield surprising analogies. One hypothesis on this aspect of consumed music would be that it reminds listeners – if it does not indeed con them into believing – that they have a body still, that even while consciously active in the rationalistic production process they and their bodies are not yet wholly separated. They owe this consolation to the same mechanical principle that alienates them from their bodies.<sup>73</sup>

What Adorno provides here is a particular perspective on music and dance which goes back to the period before the rock'n'roll years, and more specifically to the popular music styles of the 1930s and 1940s. Adorno sees listening to music and dancing to it primarily in the context of leisure, where its main social function is seen as filling 'free time', as part of the production process and the division of labour. Dance from this perspective, rather like sport, was acceptable within a highly rationalized process, since it was a means for the 'workers' to 'let off steam' during their relaxation hours, and thus remain more productive during their working hours. For Adorno, rock'n'roll was no different from the mass popular music of the 1930s and 1940s in this respect. However, I would

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<sup>73</sup> Adorno (1989), p.49

argue here that, while Adorno identifies an important aspect of the way that a potentially disruptive sensuality and physicality had previously been harnessed by capitalism for its own purposes, he fails to recognize the truly transgressive and disruptive features of rock'n'roll at its first appearance in the mid-1950s. I suggest, unlike Adorno, that one of the reasons why rock'n'roll dancing created such moral panic is that it broke through the balance reached between labour and leisure time that previous popular music styles exhibited, and which suggested the smooth assimilation of mass media, music, and dance, to the production process. During the first rock'n'roll years in the European contexts observed here, a period of rationalization, modernization, and efforts towards social reconstruction, the focus of young people on dance styles that emphasized the physical (in ways that were seen by the adults as 'primitive') is seen as social threat partly because it disrupts this process in ways that had not been evident before. From my perspective, what is implied here is the difficulty of accommodating the newly emergent social group of the teenagers within the above process. Teenagers, occupying a space between childhood and adult years, were something new for these societies, as has already been discussed earlier in this chapter. To take this further: I argue that this group could not be easily assimilated within the production process, in the same way that their new rock'n'roll dance craze could not be seen as an acceptable use of spare time in the sense in which Adorno describes the social function of dance as a way of relaxing in order to be ready to work again the next day. Adult communities saw their children placing such an emphasis on dance but not within any labour process. In this sense, rock'n'roll dance – unlike the previous dance styles of the 1930s and 1940s – had a contrary effect when it came to its social function; seen in this way, rock'n'roll was, you might say, counter-productive.

The second part of the argument is one that has been already mentioned in relation to the act of dancing apart, and the definition of gender roles; it will be useful here to develop this further, and to emphasize the connection between rock'n'roll and sensuality, which was regarded as so alarming by adults at the time. Obvious as it might seem now, it nevertheless needs to be stressed that this connection is one that was simply assumed by the adults and was not necessarily one that the teenagers themselves saw as a means towards the direct stimulation and satisfaction of feelings of sensuality, even if

their dance styles were self-evidently sensual in character. Adorno, commenting on the jitterbugs in relation to jazz fans, makes this contradiction even more powerful when he draws on the concept of imitation. He writes that: ‘People do not dance or listen “from sensuality” and sensuality is certainly not satisfied by listening, but the gestures of the sensual are imitated ... it is as if desire’s surrogate itself simultaneously turned against it; the “realistic” behaviour of the oppressed triumphs over his dream of happiness while being itself incorporated into the latter.’<sup>74</sup> Seen in these terms, the imitation of sensuality is at the same time the taming of the sensual – it stands for the sensual as what Adorno calls its ‘surrogate’ while still retaining, I suggest, its capacity to alarm. These teenagers, whose place was still being ‘negotiated’ within these societies that remained largely conservative, were not yet adults, and were not yet part of the labour process, were not yet socially permitted to experience sensuality and were not yet experiencing the need to ‘let off steam’ as workers during their leisure time. And yet they were largely embracing this sensually-charged music and its dance styles; what the ‘moral entrepreneurs’ had failed to see was that this connection, apparent as it might have been, was not one to be taken literally.

But this was not easy to see at the time since the adoption of dancing of which the function was not its role in a labour process, and its sensual character, should be read from another angle as well in order to reveal the whole complexity of the new phenomenon as one that is alarming. The fact that dance and physical movement are fundamental to the way we embody our musical experience is one that goes without question. It is also through dance and physical movement that a different kind of rationality, the ‘reason of the body’, which is physically liberating is manifested. This element, closely linked to sensuality, seemed to have disrupted something else, socially normative, at this time of rock’n’roll reception: the acceptable norms of behaviour in public, as opposed to private. Thus, what was new for the dance style that this generation embraced was the convergence between what was (or ought to be) individual and social behaviour, what seemed like private behaviour being brought into the public space. As Chambers puts it:

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<sup>74</sup> Theodor W. Adorno, ‘On the fetish character in music and the regression of listening’ in *The Culture Industry: Selected Essays on Mass Culture* (London: Routledge Classics, 2001), p.53

Dancing, where the explicit and implicit zones of socialised pleasures and individual desires entwine in the momentary rediscovery of the 'reason of the body' (Nietzsche), is undoubtedly one of the main avenues along which pop's 'sense' travels. Suspended over the predictable rhythms of the everyday, to dance often involves loaded steps, a pattern of obliquely registered tensions. These represent not only the contradictory pulls between work and pleasure, but also between a commonsensical view of pleasure ('letting off steam', 'a well-earned break', 'enjoying yourself') and a deeper, internalised moment where a serious self-realization – sexual and social, private and public – is being pursued.<sup>75</sup>

The sounds of rock'n'roll carried elements of sensuality in the rhythm, and also the vocal style of the songs' delivery. As has been seen in the discussion above, all five countries concerned in this study remained essentially conservative in character, and the dance styles associated with rock'n'roll – innocuous as these might seem to us nowadays – provoked reactions that say less about the 'danger' of rock'n'roll as such, and much more about attitudes in the receiving countries themselves. Needless to say, these hostile views on the new cultural idiom were not only restricted to the behaviour of audiences, but were equally directed towards the performers acting as the prime mediators of style and 'sexuality' – something that has been touched upon at several points in this chapter. This had to do again with what were regarded as acceptable standards of behaviour for each country, and the style of performance that had been prominent in these countries up to the point when the rock'n'roll explosion first appeared. For example, in Italy, as Gundle suggests, when it came to other styles of popular music, the singer was unlikely to dance, and would simply appear to 'stand still and make composed gestures, such as placing their hands over their heart'.<sup>76</sup> In the context of the influence of catholicism, it was especially the erotic aspect of rock'n'roll's physicality that was initially suppressed in Italy.<sup>77</sup> Similar examples exist in all the other countries that this study is looking at.

However, rock'n'roll was certainly not unique as a type of music that created these kinds of reactions. As Chaffee argues, 'rebellious' forms of music are evident at other points in the twentieth century: 'Jazz, big band, blues, boogie woogie, rock'n'roll, and punk were at one stage in their adoption musical styles viewed by mainstream society

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<sup>75</sup> Chambers (1985), p.17

<sup>76</sup> Gundle, p.375

<sup>77</sup> Ibid

as emblems of youthful rebellion.’ He goes on: ‘Approximately the same was true of the “naughty” waltz in Strauss’ time, and of many other genres that have long since joined the pantheon of “classical” or the ashheap of “old fashioned”’.<sup>78</sup> Nonetheless, rock’n’roll had been particularly effective in these terms as a musical idiom that had a mass appeal, manifested during a time of social, economic, and technological developments that allowed it to have an even more notable impact (hitherto unprecedented) on teenagers’ lives. If one combines all the above with the continued efforts of Britain, France, Germany (both West and East), Greece, and Italy to rebuild their societies and redefine their national identities, then it is in such a context that the consideration of rock’n’roll as a ‘threat’ needs to be understood. Always seen at the time in terms of cultural ‘triviality’, or as an expression of juvenile delinquency, the newly developed musical culture that surrounded rock’n’roll provoked much opposition by promoting a youth image and identity that all these five European countries found unsuitable for their young citizens.

This conservative attitude, however, also needs to be seen in relation to the position adopted by each of these countries towards the USA and the way the inhabitants of each country saw Americans, both politically and in cultural terms. I have so far specifically stressed that during these post-WWII years, American imports could not be prevented, because the USA had become the country that not only provided financial and military support to these countries, but also because they had all fallen under its sphere of influence during the ensuing Cold War years. The fact that East Germany seems to be the exception here, with its initial ban on American imports and the existence and consumption of anything American-influenced within its borders, only helps to demonstrate how even popular culture is subject to international politics.

Thus, Britain, France, West Germany, Greece, and Italy had no way of avoiding the existence of cultural idioms like rock’n’roll within their borders – but, as we saw through the moral panics that were aroused among the older generation, these countries were not ready to applaud it either. The point was made in the previous chapter regarding how these European countries had tended at this period to put forward a somewhat elitist position that strongly emphasized their historical affinities with high culture in order to

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<sup>78</sup> Steven H. Chaffee, ‘Popular music and communication research: an editorial epilogue’ in *Communication Research*, 12 (1985), p.416



oppose what they saw as the destructive force of the commercialized mass culture that the USA was exporting, and of which rock'n'roll had been an effective part. This position came to contrast markedly with the way in which the mass of people in Europe had come to view America as a dream land where one could maintain a better life; it also contrasted very strongly with the fascination of young Europeans and the emerging youth culture for the kind of lifestyle that they assumed their American counterparts enjoyed. Bearing in mind that American culture was clearly in Europe to stay, a different way of dealing with it needed to be pursued. As Pells puts it:

The issue, therefore, was whether those on the receiving end of America's mass culture could diminish its magnetism, especially for young audiences who had grown up on American movies, rock music, comic books, and television shows, and who seemed permanently alienated from Europe's older, higher art forms. This then would be a cultural battle not only between Europe and America, but between intellectuals and commoners, parents and children, inside Europe itself.<sup>79</sup>

Pells' words serve to remind us of the further implications of the existence of American culture in Europe during the years of rock'n'roll reception. This was still a time when European views on the USA were at the very least paradoxical and even contradictory, based on the one hand on a desire to emulate, a wish to become like the USA, and live the 'American dream', while on the other hand being characterized by resentment, seeing American culture as something to avoid, as something morally and intellectually inferior. But we should now move beyond what might at first sight appear to be purely ideological differences between these European countries and the USA in order to better grasp the underlying complexities of this contradictory relationship, which I suggest has its basis in the unequal character of the political and economic power relations. A closer look at the politico-economic relationships between the USA and Britain, France, West and East Germany, Greece, and Italy, will better inform the attitudes of these countries towards American popular culture in general, and rock'n'roll in particular.

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<sup>79</sup> Pells (1997), p.234



### **‘It’s (not) only rock’n’roll’: American culture, moral panics and politics**

Indeed, the political relationship of these countries to the USA – that is to say, economic dependence on what was now a politically dominant superpower – was reflected in the complexities in the ways in which American cultural products and imports in general were received in Europe. One way of understanding the complexities of rock’n’roll consumption in these terms is to look at the West German situation: the reservations of the West German adult community and authorities in relation to the threat of rock’n’roll have already been discussed earlier. However, West Germany had to be diplomatic in its taking up of rock’n’roll and other American cultural products due to the reality of its position when it came to international politics and the Cold War. Thus, though seen as threatening in gender and racial terms, American cultural products, including rock’n’roll, eventually became ‘de-demonized’ due to their American origins. Indeed, as Poiger argues, even though the West German authorities had made efforts to contain American influences during the first half of the 1950s, American imports clearly could not be totally prohibited; rather, popular culture and American imports started by the second half of the decade to be used as a Cold War weapon, mostly after pressure from American government officials.<sup>80</sup> In the second half of the 1950s, the consumption of popular culture was considered depoliticized by the West German authorities, mainly in reaction to the kind of totalitarian restrictions placed on it within the Eastern Bloc countries (and in particular in East Germany), and as a result this gave popular culture a new political role.<sup>81</sup> As Poiger puts it: ‘West German cold war liberals made cultural consumption compatible with a new German identity that they located beyond fascism and totalitarianism, indeed beyond all ideologies’.<sup>82</sup> In this way rock’n’roll became aligned with a new idea of Germanness that was above ideologies, favoured consumerism, did not come into conflict with American ideas (initially, at least), and positioned West German society in opposition to their Cold War opponents, in particular East Germany.

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<sup>80</sup> Poiger (1) (2000), pp.68-69

<sup>81</sup> Ibid, p.208

<sup>82</sup> Poiger (2) (2000), p.135

The situation in East Germany was the exact opposite to that in West Germany. East German rock'n'roll fans were regarded as using this music as a means of opposition simply by being fans of it. Rock'n'roll in the East thus became ever increasingly politicized, in contrast to its de-politicization in West Germany. To cite Poiger again: 'in May 1957, the Politburo announced a ban on student travel to West Germany and NATO countries. Restrictive measures against rock'n'roll and jazz music and fans followed. In such a context, cultural consumption could not be depoliticized'.<sup>83</sup> Thus, by opposing this music because of its American origin, the East German authorities automatically turned their teenagers who were drawn to this new musical fad into outcasts and rebels, giving their consumption a heavily political significance. This is further informed by the 'agenda' underlying what was regarded as the acceptable cultural orientation that East Germany should follow in pursuit of its construction of a national identity. As Goodboy, Tate, and Wallace suggest, in East Germany the communist SED<sup>84</sup> (created in 1946), 'now sought to impose Soviet-style socialist principles on every aspect of a culture which had set out to evolve its own distinctively German identity'.<sup>85</sup> They go on to argue that, as a cultural attitude in the GDR, there was an explicit hostility to everything which was modern or American.<sup>86</sup> Indeed, as we have already seen, rock'n'roll was initially banned in the GDR when it first made its appearance. Maas and Reszel write:

[I]t was the era of the 'cold war' and East German politicians were in search of a socialist national culture, one which could articulate an *antifaschistische-demokratische Erneuerung* (anti-fascist-democratic renewal). In this climate Western influences had to be rejected [...]<sup>87</sup>

As has already been mentioned, at the same time when rock'n'roll was becoming legitimized and more acceptable in West Germany, East German authorities would begin applying strict measures against it, both as an attempt to protect their youth from Western influences, but also to protect their domestic culture generally. Goodboy, Tate, and

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<sup>83</sup> Poiger (i) (2000), p.130

<sup>84</sup> Socialist Unity Party of Germany

<sup>85</sup> Axel Goodboy, Dennis Tate, and Ian Wallace, 'The Failed Socialist Experiment: Culture in the GDR' in *German Cultural Studies: An Introduction*, Rob Burns (ed.), (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), p.153

<sup>86</sup> Ibid

<sup>87</sup> Maas and Reszel, p.267

Wallace draw attention to a regulation laid down in 1958, the so-called '60:40' clause, which suggested that of all broadcasts and performances within the GDR, and of the repertoire of all bands, at least 60 per cent should be the products of GDR or other socialist countries.<sup>88</sup> Here it is worth pointing out that in East Germany a special terminology was created in order to distance East German music from the music of the West, something that can be seen as a further manifestation of the political character music was given by the state. As noted by Larkey, until the 1980s, rock was not used as a term, and instead terms like 'youth' and 'dance' music were employed in order to refer to the rock-related musical styles, while 'bands' were named 'combos' or 'dance' ensembles or 'dance' orchestras, and 'popular' music was labelled as 'youth-effective' (*jugendwirksam*) instead.<sup>89</sup>

However, these kinds of responses to rock'n'roll were not only to be encountered in Germany, at the 'centre' of the Cold War, although it has to be admitted that it was there that they were at their most intense. In Greece, the authorities had shown considerable tolerance for the rock'n'roll phenomenon during the first two years of its existence in the country. After the intensification of American involvement in Greek politics and its destructive effects (particularly felt as the 1950s were reaching their end), the Greek stance towards America changed, however.<sup>90</sup> It was at this period that social attitudes towards cultural idioms like rock'n'roll also changed, but, as we have already seen, this went in the opposite direction to the changes in social attitudes in West Germany – that is to say, in Greece attitudes towards rock'n'roll became increasingly hostile, as did its general hostility towards American culture. Even in those countries where one would assume a more straightforward relationship with the USA, things again were surrounded by further complications. Britain, while on one hand had a market that was open to consumption of Hollywood products,<sup>91</sup> was not always uncritically receptive of their influence. The broadcasts of the American Forces Network brought British people into contact with American mass culture, 'swing' music, comedy shows etc.<sup>92</sup> This, according to Wicke, led to a campaign by British public opinion against undue

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<sup>88</sup> Goodboy, Tate and Wallace, p.174

<sup>89</sup> Larkey (2002), p.247

<sup>90</sup> Christina Politi, 'Europe in the Cold War: American intervention in Greece 1946-1964', p.13

<sup>91</sup> Strinati, p.57

<sup>92</sup> Chambers (1985), p.3

American influence.<sup>93</sup> Britain was censoring American cultural imports especially after commercial TV was launched in 1954.<sup>94</sup> Cloonan applies the word ‘xenophobia’ when he speaks about the first years of rock’n’roll in Britain, since the first response towards this new style of music ‘was clouded by fear of “Americanization” and the replacement of a genuine national culture with crass commercialism’.<sup>95</sup> Britain, one of the main allies of the USA, was not only the main importer of its goods but was at the same time the most important exporter of American cultural products to the rest of Europe. The combination of its alliance with the USA and its dependence on it did not allow for direct opposition to its cultural and economic dominance. On the other hand France, as Crothers notes, had historically been closely aligned with the United States in world politics, and, despite the fact that tension often underlies their relations, they share common goals of ‘democracy, human rights, and capitalism’; though their relations are not always amicable, the ‘relationship endures for social, political, economic, and ideological reasons’.<sup>96</sup> However, France has always had a clear-cut attitude towards American culture, and was never subtle in its efforts to eliminate the influence of this in favour of elevating its own national culture. Italy, on the other hand, had been more passive and vulnerable to American influences.

Hence, in each of these countries American influence was to be seen in cultural, economic, as well as political terms. As has been discussed in the two previous sections, the adult community and the established culture of these countries frequently disapproved of this powerful American cultural influence, and more particularly, rock’n’roll; the new youth culture, however, saw in American popular culture an escape from the parochial culture of their parents, and in this sense rock’n’roll was seen as a revolutionary new idiom. Whether these positions are manifestations of Americanism, or anti-Americanism, imperialism or democratic modernization, they do not affect the fact that rock’n’roll made an explosive contribution to the popular music scenes in each of these countries starting from this period of reception. The way in which this occurred is discussed in the next section.

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<sup>93</sup> Wicke (1990), p.57

<sup>94</sup> Cloonan (1996), p.13

<sup>95</sup> Ibid, p.29

<sup>96</sup> Crothers, p.170

**‘...I just wanna hear some rock’n’roll’: early indigenous rock’n’roll productions**

Indeed, after the very first years of rock’n’roll reception, attempts in rock’n’roll performance and production began in all the countries with which this dissertation is dealing, but were as yet nowhere to be seen as particularly creative. The musical elements of this new music, which had been so enthusiastically taken up by audiences, had also been taken up by performers (either professionals or amateurs), whereas in most of the countries we are looking at, the music industry had already begun producing songs in the rock’n’roll style. However, a closer look at the national production of rock’n’roll in the five countries in question during this period reveals that these were not yet representative of an ‘authoritative’ taking up of the music. I would suggest that the inability demonstrated in these national contexts during this time to produce more original songs in the rock’n’roll style and, instead, the evident action of approaching it superficially as an idiom to be copied, affirms the assumption that there was a certain distance between these contexts and the culture that originated the rock’n’roll idiom. This distance, which has been thoroughly discussed above both in historico-geographical, musical, and socio-political terms, is what I suggest allowed for no degree of ‘translation’ or ‘transcription’ of the rock’n’roll idiom, and rather during this specific period led to mere copying. In order to support this claim further we shall now turn the discussion to the music that was produced in France, West and East Germany, Greece, and Italy during these years. Britain, which offers a particularly exemplary case for this period that is also to an extent exceptional, will be discussed last.

Briefly after rock’n’roll made its first appearance in France, as Looseley suggests, it was followed by a period of production of ‘harmless imitations’, all of which copying the American rock’n’roll style (and most of which were covers of American hits), combined with lyrics in the French language. As he writes, Delanoë had already adapted his first Elvis song by 1957, while Boris Vian wrote rock’n’roll songs that can be considered as ‘half-imitation, half-parody’, like ‘Rock and Rollmops’ (1957) and ‘Va t’ Faire Cuire un Oeuf, Man!’ (1957), both recorded by Henri Salvador with the pseudonym

Henry Cording and his Original Rock and Roll Boys.<sup>97</sup> Papanikolaou names the song ‘Nouvelle Vague’ (1959) by Richard Anthony, which was a cover of the Coasters’ ‘Three Cool Cats’ as an example of the first French rock’n’roll attempts.<sup>98</sup> Others considered as imitators of the first rock’n’roll sounds in France are Danyel Gerard, and Anny Cordy. Nevertheless, the most representative figure of French rock’n’roll is Johnny Hallyday, the ‘French Elvis’, who, though the most important rock’n’roller of this time, is going to be discussed in the next chapter as one of the prominent figures of the French rock’n’roll imitation period. As Looseley points out, ‘as with many of the manufactured stars of the late 1950s, his managers (Georges Leroux, then Johnny Stark) and his record labels (Vogue, then Philips) were also instrumental in fabricating an American-style persona for him’.<sup>99</sup> The French record industry was very quick in taking up the rock’n’roll idiom, and songs in the rock’n’roll style, as has already been mentioned, had been recorded by 1957. However, in Looseley’s words, ‘all of these were anodyne derivatives that produced no social discontinuity, no sense of rock as a movement’.<sup>100</sup>

A similar way of engaging with this new musical idiom is observed in West Germany. According to Maas and Reszel, after its reception in West Germany, rock’n’roll was taken up by artists like Peter Kraus and Ted Herold, whose versions of rock’n’roll songs were sung with German lyrics, with the occasional addition of English words like ‘baby’, ‘hello’ etc.<sup>101</sup> As Poiger notes, Peter Kraus in particular was at first introduced as the ‘German Elvis’, probably to provide an alternative to the admiration of the German rock’n’roll fans for Elvis himself, whom the authorities found to be inappropriate as an idol for the German youth. Peter Kraus was soon later aligned with the image of the good German boy, who sang ‘tame’ German covers of American hits, such as ‘Hafenrock’ (1958), a cover of ‘Jailhouse Rock’ (and, just like the French Johnny Hallyday, he will be a prominent figure of the next phase of rock’n’roll as well).<sup>102</sup> Soon, Peter Kraus was joined by Conny Froboess, a female companion in music and film.

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<sup>97</sup> Looseley (2) (2003), p.23

<sup>98</sup> Papanikolaou, p.116

<sup>99</sup> David Looseley, ‘Fabricating Johnny: French popular music and national culture’ in *French Cultural Studies*, 16/2 (2005), p.193

<sup>100</sup> Looseley (2) (2003), p.23

<sup>101</sup> Maas and Reszel, p.276, n.9

<sup>102</sup> Poiger (i) (2000), p.191

Although the appearance and promotion of these new West German idols, a means towards the domestication of rock'n'roll music, will be further discussed in the next chapter as more relevant to the West German efforts towards institutionalizing rock'n'roll, this is a process that has already begun taking place in this period, and was further facilitated by historical events. More specifically, the efforts of the West German authorities to give rock music a less rebellious character were strengthened by the fact that Elvis had been stationed in West Germany in 1958 after his conscription into the American army. In this context, so Maase argues, the German press – which had been particularly hostile to Elvis during the first waves of the German teenage fascination with him – now began referring to him as no longer a 'moral threat', but mainly as an 'exemplary soldier'.<sup>103</sup> Larkey suggests that it was because of the massive popularity of Elvis, especially during the years when he was stationed in West Germany (1958-1960), that 'German clones' like Peter Kraus, Ted Herold, the teenie star Conny Froboess, and also the American Connie Francis emerged, all of whom 'sang German cover versions to popular American rock and roll, pop, and doo-wop tunes'.<sup>104</sup> Similarly to the situation in France, the West German creative attempts at rock'n'roll production during this period are based on the recording of covers of successful American rock'n'roll songs that are combined with lyrics in the indigenous language.

In East Germany, things had already started taking a different shape. Since there was no possibility for any official indigenous release of rock'n'roll music, due to the totalitarian regime and the authorities' hostility towards American culture, an active rock scene started flourishing in other ways. As Ryback writes,

[b]y the summer of 1957, the Pavilion, an outdoor stage in the Klara Zetkin Park in Leipzig, [...] provided a forum for fledgling East German rock-and-roll ensembles. Fifteen and sixteen year olds arrived with a bass, an accordion, and an old set of drums to hammer out tunes by Little Richard, Fats Domino, and Bill Haley. At the same time, the Communist Youth's organization's Club House for Culture in North Leipzig became famous as one of the city's leading rock-and-roll venues. On weekends, young people flocked to the club to hear local Leipzig talent play rock and roll, while the fans practiced the latest Western dances.<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>103</sup> Maase

<sup>104</sup> Larkey (2002), p.237

<sup>105</sup> Ryback, pp.27-28



Nevertheless, this freedom that the East German youth experienced during this time in its ability to engage with rock'n'roll did not last for long; the East German state began a war against rock'n'roll in 1958. As might be expected, it has proved impossible to find recorded evidence of East German rock'n'roll production of this period, due to the circumstances described above. Nonetheless, this should not mislead us into believing that an active engagement with the rock'n'roll idiom did not exist. As Wicke and Shepherd argue, the East German state opposition to and strict regulation against rock'n'roll confined the development of East German rock during this period to the margins, in places where the authorities could not easily find and regulate it. Wicke and Shepherd claim that East German 'answers to Elvis' existed elsewhere than the urban centres, performing in villages and small towns.<sup>106</sup>

Resembling the situation in France and West Germany during the years of rock'n'roll reception, the music industry in Italy also introduced Italian performers who released covers of American songs, although these initial attempts at Italian rock'n'roll differ from French and German examples since their lyrics were initially in English. For example, Mina – a 'pop virtuoso', according to Minganti – released covers of 'Splish Splash', 'The Diary', and 'Be Bop-a-Lula' in 1957/58. At the same period Andriano Celentano, who is described by Minganti as a 'Presleyan clone unaware of the black roots of the songs', released 'Rip it Up' (1957), 'Jailhouse Rock' (1957) and 'Tutti Frutti' (1958), all covers in English.<sup>107</sup> According to Gundle, these first covers Celentano recorded in 1957 (the same year the first National Festival of Rock took place in Italy); these records were not successful, unlike the ones Celentano released soon after and for which Italian lyrics were used.<sup>108</sup> Andriano Celentano, the Italian Elvis, was for Italy what Johnny Hallyday and Peter Kraus were for France and West Germany respectively, and, like them, he also becomes a leading figure of the next phase of rock'n'roll in his country. He is also notable for being considered, as Tarli also suggests, the person who brought the 'physical aspect' of performance in the Italian popular music scene.<sup>109</sup> Other Italian rock'n'roll performers of the time were Giorgio Gaber, Enzo Iannacci, Peppino Di

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<sup>106</sup> Wicke and Shepherd, p.26

<sup>107</sup> Minganti (1993), p.142

<sup>108</sup> Gundle, p.373

<sup>109</sup> Tarli, p.22



Capri, Brunetta, Ornella Vanoni, Iula De Palma, and Patty Pravo. An instance of originality in rock'n'roll taken up in Italy dating from these very early years can be traced in Renato Carosone's 'Tu Vuò fà l'Americano' (1957), an ironic and comic commentary on the ways in which the Italian teenagers were eager to imitate the American style. 'Tu Vuò Fà l'Americano' was itself written in the rock'n'roll style, featuring Neapolitan musical elements with elements of parody and humour.<sup>110</sup> During this phase, Italian rock'n'roll was, as Minganti points out, a curious hybridization; sometimes this was evident in the words themselves, and particularly in cases when the lyrics were part English and part Italian, like in Celentano's cover of Paul Anka's 'You Are my Destiny' (1958).<sup>111</sup>

According to Carrera, some of the songs released in Italy during this time were ones with which the Italian audience could identify. For example, '24 000 Baci' (1961), 'was one of the first post-war songs in which the language of love was drastically updated'.<sup>112</sup> Nonetheless, Italians were not yet ready to distinguish between the widely different styles of American music of the time. It is the case that they did not have enough information to enable them to be able to identify the key stylistic elements of rock'n'roll and to differentiate it from other American musical imports. Indeed, information about rock'n'roll received in Italy did not come directly from the USA, but, rather, Italy was collecting its impressions second-hand from versions that came from London, Paris, and even Amsterdam; thus, as Minganti puts it, this 'second- or thirdhand information [was] full of clumsy distortions and shallow hype'. He goes on to add: '[c]onfusion was furthered by the vague category of "foreign music in English", which combined American, British, and international-style rock/pop into one genre – and by the incomprehension of rock lyrics. Even radio stations would hardly ever identify who the performers were, let alone say where they came from. The result was a relatively low

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<sup>110</sup> Fabbri mentions how, though important musically, Carosone's work has not been particularly influential for Italian popular music (Fabbri (1989), p.135). Carosone's relationship to rock'n'roll was frequently that of parody and humour – an aspect of the reception of the music that is to be found in different guises in other European countries considered here.

<sup>111</sup> Minganti (1993), p.142

<sup>112</sup> Carrera, p.330

profile for American imports'.<sup>113</sup> It was a profile that, as we are to see in the next chapter, lasted well beyond the years of the reception period of rock'n'roll in Italy.

A similar 'distortion' of information on rock'n'roll existed in Greece as well – again one that would last for a substantial period of time beyond the 1950s. The unavailability of information, combined with a financial situation in Greece during these years that was considerably worse than was the case in the other countries discussed in this dissertation, created further difficulties when it came to the initial reception of rock'n'roll in the country. The situation is further reflected in the delay of the Greek music industry to realize the potential of this 'new musical fad', as it was regarded. For all these reasons, there was an understandable lack of recorded evidence during these years in the reception of rock'n'roll in Greece that has placed some obstacles in the way of the comparative aims of this study. Nevertheless, according to Papaspilios, the first attempts by Greek musicians to play rock'n'roll took place in 1959 by amateur bands that passed largely unnoticed at the time.<sup>114</sup> Mpozinis, on the other hand, claims that the first attempts at rock'n'roll production in Greece were made by professional bands who were playing night clubs, and were largely made up of older musicians who hired one or two younger players with the excuse that they wanted them to play electric guitar, but with the main aim of giving their bands a more youthful image.<sup>115</sup> Mpozinis maintains that the first Greek rock'n'roll band that strictly featured young musicians was Tzavadamaskouka (TZABAΔAMΑΣKOYKA), which was formed in the late 1950s<sup>116</sup> (and of whose work there is again no recorded evidence). Due to this lack of recordings or other kinds of documentation that would allow us to have a clearer picture of rock'n'roll activity in Greece during this time, Ntaloukas names this reception period the 'dark age' of Greek rock.<sup>117</sup>

A first reading of the available evidence of indigenous rock'n'roll musical activity in France, Germany, Italy, and Greece during this period of reception clearly reveals, I suggest, a paradoxical relationship between rock'n'roll consumption and production. The

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<sup>113</sup> Minganti (2000), p.153

<sup>114</sup> Kostas Papaspilios, "To Elliniko Rock" in *Panorama Ellinikis Mousikis*, (Athens: Papagrigoriou-Nakas), p.142.

<sup>115</sup> Mpozinis, p.273

<sup>116</sup> Ibid

<sup>117</sup> Ntaloukas, pp.26-27

fact that rock'n'roll had a wide youth following in each of the countries under consideration is not in question. However, it seems that – despite its wide consumption – the performers and the music industry had not yet grasped what the essential element of rock'n'roll was that provided the audience with such fascination. Thus, they merely produced copies of the already successful recipe provided by the American originals. This could be seen from a variety of perspectives. There was, for example, the lack of readiness of the local music industries to respond rapidly to such a new and unfamiliar musical idiom, and to recognize that its massive appeal to the new youth culture was more than a mere fad. This leads to the assumption that what the local music industries were not prepared for was the acceptance of the newly emergent teenage culture as an important consumer group. With the exception of East Germany, the above discussion reveals that French, West German, and Italian teenagers were not yet ready to form bands and start playing rock'n'roll on their own. This was partly due to the cost of musical instruments, partly due to the unavailability of rehearsal spaces, and partly due to the lack of any real knowledge of the music itself, so that they were totally dependent on their local music industry's record releases to form the national response to rock'n'roll. Although there are no doubt many reasons for this lack of preparation on the part of the national music industries and audiences alike in responding actively to the production of rock'n'roll, one that I consider of crucial importance is the linguistic barrier that separated the French, German, Greek, and Italian audiences from any clear idea of what the words of the song lyrics really 'meant'. Indeed, I have argued elsewhere (Chapter 2) that the lyrics of the first rock'n'roll songs were of little importance to this musical style, and I still support this case. However, I suggest that the inability to understand the words of a song – even if one 'grasps' the meaning of its pulse and rhythm – can create a certain distance from it; the feeling that, though one enjoys and can relate to the music in an engaging way, a distance from it still exists and, hence, the fascination with the music is still connected to the fascination with a different, distant, culture, the reality of which cannot truly be shared.

Although admittedly this claim does not present the whole story (the music industries and mainstream broadcasting systems in the countries being the ones to determine the production of music at the time), I nevertheless maintain that this formed a

significant barrier to the reception of rock'n'roll in non-English speaking countries. This is strengthened by the fact that, as seen in the above discussion, the music industries of the countries considered here were not yet very decisive as to whether the local productions were to be covers of the American songs with the use of lyrics in English or in the indigenous languages, and this indecision demonstrates that rock'n'roll had not yet started being actively 'domesticated' in each of the countries discussed, let alone the fact that if the cover were to be sung in English by a local artist, then the audience would probably prefer the original American version instead. Indeed, the choice of language for the local production of rock'n'roll is of a particular significance, and is a factor that complicates the description of the production of rock'n'roll during this phase as mere copying of the American originals, especially in cases where the copying was combined with the indigenous languages (as seen in France and West Germany and, after the initial years, in Italy as well). Timo Maran's position on imitation is relevant here, when he writes that in cases where 'the original and the mimic exist in different sign systems, i.e. where the mimetic activity is inevitably connected with the translation process from one language to another, the similarity will give way to correspondence, and the imitation tends to be replaced by representation'.<sup>118</sup> Thus, one could counter-argue that what we witness during this reception phase is not to be described simply as the copying of American rock'n'roll, and, indeed it is not to be reduced to it. However, as we are to see in the next chapter, it is not yet more creative 'imitation' either: rather, the examples of rock'n'roll production from these years are better understood as 'precursors' of a more active rock'n'roll reception that will be discussed in the next chapter. Though the lyrics for this initial style of rock'n'roll might not have been regarded as of primary importance, the language that is used creates different connotations for the audience.<sup>119</sup>

In contrast to the rest of the European countries under consideration here, Britain did not, of course, face any linguistic barriers of the kind experienced in France, Germany, Greece, and Italy during the reception period. Nonetheless, this is only partly the reason why Britain is the big exception in this context. When the other European

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<sup>118</sup> Timo Maran, 'Mimesis as a phenomenon of semiotic communication' in *Sign Systems Studies*, 31/1 (2003), p.205

<sup>119</sup> The issue of the language used in lyrics will be further discussed in the next chapter, where, as is to be seen, language will have an important impact on how music develops in the next phase, that of 'imitation'.

countries were still trying to adjust to the new rock'n'roll sounds and were still appearing to copy what they heard, British rock'n'roll was going through developments that became crucial for the future of the popular music of the world. Seen in the light of the above discussion, the advantageous position of Britain in these terms can be seen both from its position as the main importer of American cultural idioms (Britain being America's satellite during these years), and also from its position as a country which shares with the USA not only the same language, but many similarities in its approach to cultural production. However, even under these favourable conditions, the adaptation of rock'n'roll by the British music industry did not take place without obstacles and restrictions.<sup>120</sup> The British music industry, like the music industries of the rest of the countries under consideration, had already begun attempting to construct its 'answers to Elvis' and its early versions of British rock'n'roll singers sought to create a cleaned-up image that was seemingly rebellious but also non-threatening. The rise and success of imitations like Tommy Steele (the first of several British answers to Elvis), and the effort, as Harker points out, of the British music industry to make him stand *against* the American rock'n'roll style, and be kept away from 'bad' British publicity, shows the conservative nature of the British entertainment industry during this period<sup>121</sup> – one that is not unlike the rest of the countries we are looking at. Tommy Steele's first hit, 'Rock with the Caveman' has its affinities with the music hall tradition. Similar tendencies apply to Cliff Richard and Adam Faith. The British version of rock'n'roll rapidly became turned into a musical idiom for family entertainment – the transformation into the equivalent of what Chambers calls, 'High School rock'.<sup>122</sup> This did not, however, satisfy the British audience, and the initial enthusiasm of British youth for rock'n'roll was superseded by its dissatisfaction not only with the British imitations but even with the subsequent American versions of rock'n'roll, which it quickly came to consider was now being further neutralized and commercialized.

The disillusionment of British youth with the further neutralization of rock'n'roll was strengthened by the fact that in Britain – more so than in any of the other countries in

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<sup>120</sup> In Britain, there had also been a ban on performances by American bands until the mid-1950s, which shows that there had already been a tension between the American and British music industries.

<sup>121</sup> Harker, p.70

<sup>122</sup> Chambers (1985), p.40

question – there was an availability of more authentic african-american music, like original blues recordings. The contrast between these and rock’n’roll as it was now presented by the American and British music industries was one that the British audience could not relate to. At the same time, Britain, compared to the rest of the countries this dissertation is dealing with, had something very distinctive when it came to popular music *practice*: something that is clearly manifested through *skiffle*, an african-american-influenced musical style, the practitioners of which played music with home-made instruments, and which did not use any electrified sounds. The culture of skiffle increased the popularity of amateurish, and democratic, music making. In fact, many of the British musicians who contributed to the shift from rock’n’roll to rock were initially involved with skiffle in the 1950s. In Bradley’s words, skiffle, of which the main representative was Lonnie Donegan, was ‘a jazz or blues rhythm section plus singer’.<sup>123</sup> As Chambers puts it, skiffle ‘...was the first popular attempt undertaken to appropriate parts of American popular culture that were not drawn directly from the US charts or show business.’<sup>124</sup> However, British skiffle and British rock’n’roll are not to be considered as entirely separate, but rather as parts of a continuum of shared influences from blues and American folk music, at one end of which the home-grown and home-made aspects of skiffle are carried over into early British rock’n’roll, and at the other end these become taken up and manipulated by the record industry and official broadcasting system. Lonnie Donegan’s successful version of ‘Rock Island Line’<sup>125</sup> (1955) reveals this continuity. Thus, commercial rock ‘n’ roll was not the only source of what was later to become British rock music. In Chambers words, ‘[a]t this point the web of musical intersections becomes further complicated as the effects of rock ‘n’ roll and US pop music in general overlap with the more esoteric musical practice spawned in and around the Trad jazz world. It was this combination, briefly anticipated by skiffle, that was to lay much of the basis for the particular tones of British pop in the decade to come.’<sup>126</sup>

We can say therefore that a more home-grown turn towards rock’n’roll music-making in Britain was taking place aside from the rock’n’roll commercial productions

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<sup>123</sup> Bradley, p.62

<sup>124</sup> Chambers (1985), p.45

<sup>125</sup> John Lomax recorded a version of the American blues (folk) song ‘Rock Island Line’ in the mid-1930s, which was later popularized by Lead Belly’s version.

<sup>126</sup> Chambers (1985), p.49

presented by the record industry, as Bradley also argues, and this was largely influenced by the American originals in the form of blues and folk recordings, as opposed to the watered-down versions that were now available through the broadcast media. This musical activity was group-based, developing in live circuits, and was aimed at substituting both for the unsatisfactory popular music disseminated in the late 1950s and also for the fact that the big American rock'n'rollers were not touring Britain.<sup>127</sup> The British rock'n'roll enthusiasts and music collectors followed their fascination with original rock'n'rollers like Chuck Berry and Little Richard, and found new inspiration in the work of original bluesmen, who became thereafter their biggest influence.<sup>128</sup> After British rock'n'roll had been tamed by the industry and the media, the audience turned to these non-professional rock bands who were performing in local clubs. Britain was not producing its own rock'n'roll music until the late-1950s (cover songs aside), but British teenagers were actively involved in music making and already had a knowledge of the more uncommercial, original african-american musical styles. The family entertainment version of music that was being broadcast left them unsatisfied and thus, in Bloomfield's words, 'a burgeoning club scene threw up a plethora of local bands often unknown beyond a radius of thirty miles from their home cities. Most famous, of course, were The Beatles out of Liverpool, though the pervasive rhythm-and-blues influences were more fully represented in the music of The Rolling Stones'.<sup>129</sup> However, the active involvement with rock'n'roll and with local bands in clubs, was not a 'localized' trend. An important point made by Harker, and which supports my argument concerning 'national' identities as opposed to 'local' identities, is that the British bands of the early 1960s were both local and national at the same time. He writes that '[t]he whole matrix was held together by the networks of clubs, the gigging and touring of bands, and, above all, by the fact that *this* music had been fostered from the "bottom" up, not imposed from the "top" down'.<sup>130</sup> Tony Crombie and the Rockets, formed in 1956, were, as Thompson suggests, the first official rock band in the country.<sup>131</sup> Furthermore, as Thompson

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<sup>127</sup> Bradley, pp.71-72

<sup>128</sup> Ibid, p.89

<sup>129</sup> Bloomfield, p.62

<sup>130</sup> Harker, p.79

<sup>131</sup> Gordon Thompson, *Please Please Me: Sixties British Pop, Inside Out* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), p.24



suggests, the appearance of American electric guitars in Britain by the late 1950s further broadened the possibilities for the playing of rock'n'roll.<sup>132</sup> In Bradley's words, 'the take-up of rock in Britain established music-making, rather than just music-listening, as an important, respected, even central practice in the lives of huge numbers of (mainly male) youth culture members. Amateurism took root everywhere, among those hitherto most unlikely amateurs of all, working-class boys'.<sup>133</sup> As Harker points out, in addition to the above, the turn of British youth to music activities and the emergence of the first British rock bands led to a turn away from violence and street activities.<sup>134</sup> This could be an ironic response to the moral panics in Britain that related rock culture with juvenile delinquency. It also presents, for the reception period dealt with in this chapter, the biggest difference between Britain and the rest of the countries discussed in this dissertation.

The British version of rock'n'roll became known as the 'beat boom', and had been influenced, as we have seen, by skiffle, jazz, and blues.<sup>135</sup> Some elements had been characteristic of the first musical attempts of British rockers, as Bradley observes: initially, they tried (not always successfully) to sing in an American accent, something evident in the work of many of the British singers of the time, and is also seen in the early work of The Beatles and the The Rolling Stones. British youth were fascinated by the American accent many British pop singers in the 1950s were using, even if this was clearly recognized as being in the service of commercial interests. This fascination was extended to every feature surrounding American culture. As Chambers puts it, '...the apparently effortless transition between the different worlds of Britain and "America" had by the late 1950s become a distinctive feature of much of the former's youth culture'.<sup>136</sup> There is another aspect to be taken into account in relation to this adaptability of the American elements on the part of British practitioners, one that is also noted by Tunstall, who writes that:

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<sup>132</sup> Ibid, p.39; Thompson attributes this change to the action on the part of the British government to lift a ban on the import of American guitars in 1959.

<sup>133</sup> Bradley, p.75

<sup>134</sup> Harker, p.75

<sup>135</sup> Ibid, p.77

<sup>136</sup> Chambers (1985), p.1



[T]he 1960s British singers grew up in a world where black musicians were part of the local scenery; since the 1950s West Indian Calypso and West African High Life music has been provided in Britain by strong contingents of black musicians. This British combination of resident black musicians plus some Jewish media entrepreneurs may seem rather unremarkable to American eyes. But it is different from the contemporary situation in most other European countries; its mini melting pot, and its black citizens have, then, helped to keep Britain – compared with its European neighbours – on a cosmopolitan and export-oriented path.<sup>137</sup>

Bearing this in mind, one could see a further explanation – apart from the historical affinities of Britain with the USA – for the reasons why British youth culture seemed to be more ‘at ease’ with foreign cultural idioms. I suggest that it is a combination of these affinities with the shared language, and, most importantly, the more active involvement in music making that together make account for the rapid initial assimilation of african-american music elements in Britain.

The most important point to be made, and the characteristic that most distinguishes British bands from rock’n’roll music performers in other countries is that they soon began writing and recording their own material, influenced by rock’n’roll but combined with their own cultural influences as well – something that will be further discussed in the next chapter. Through this, according to Bradley, they ‘actually made the music their own in every sense of the words’.<sup>138</sup> This is the first instance of a national version of rock, a version that would also have a big influence on the rest of the countries being considered here. In 1962, The Beatles released their first single: ‘Love Me Do’; as a new era for rock was just beginning, rock’n’roll became a ‘pop’ idiom, and song-writing bands, representatives of a more ‘authentic rock’ music, began to dominate. The release of ‘Love Me Do’ is one of the very first instances of this shift, and it is, I suggest, the moment that could most effectively ‘define’ the end of the ‘reception period’.

## **In conclusion**

The years of the reception period are characterized by an obvious industrial and economic recovery, and the rise of a consumerism-orientated culture in all the countries this dissertation is dealing with, though this might seem to apply less in East Germany

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<sup>137</sup> Tunstall, pp.132-33

<sup>138</sup> Bradley, p.124

(where material living standards had risen, but where, due to a centralized economy, society was not so consumer-orientated) and Greece (which had experienced a slower economic recovery due to the civil war and also due to having industrialized at a later stage than the rest of the countries under consideration here). All of these countries to varying degrees appeared to have remained more conservative societies in comparison to the USA. However, I consider this apparent conservatism to be the result of the position in which the European countries found themselves during the post-war years, a period of important changes for which the USA played a crucial role. More specifically, as has already been mentioned, the post-war years marked a period when the European countries under consideration here were making efforts to recover from the destruction of the war, and to redefine their national identities. The recognition of the USA as the dominant superpower in the world, and the economic dependence of these countries on it, was seen as obstructing the kind of ideas and aspirations that underpinned the national reconstructions that were taking place during these years. As has already been discussed, these European countries had now more than ever before been brought to the position of having to engage with the mass produced, mass mediated, and mass promoted products of the American cultural industry. As a result they had no choice but recognize their economic dependence on the USA, something emphasized by the technological developments that allowed for the rapid export and distribution of American cultural products, and which was reinforced by the presence of American soldiers stationed in these countries. In reaction to what was often seen as this invasion by American mass culture, the representatives of official European culture often stressed the historical affinities of Europe with higher intellectual and cultural ideals, in attempts both to reclaim their superiority in the face of the USA's power in the world during this period,<sup>139</sup> and also to express the incompatibility of American mass culture with the seriousness of European high culture. Such conservatism is therefore of an ambiguous nature here: it does not have to do with any backwardness on the part of the European

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<sup>139</sup> An interesting parallel to this is what is identified by Amselle as the 'origin of the notion of culture', which he attributes to the situation of the German nation in the late nineteenth-century, which, 'because of its lack of political unity, stressed cultural development, while France and England concentrated on economic growth'; Jean-Loup Amselle, *Mestizo Logics: Anthropology of Identity in Africa and Elsewhere*, Claudia Royal (trans.), (California: Stanford University Press, 1998), p.25. Thus, the importance of 'culture', or, 'high culture' in our case, in struggles to claim superiority, or, even, to encounter feelings of inferiority towards other states, is one that has historical continuity in the European context.

countries contrasted with a more liberal American society, since the USA could well be regarded as being no less conservative in these terms. It is my argument here that the apparent conservatism of these European countries is the result of the difficult position of having to allow the existence of American cultural idioms in their countries, even though what they saw as the principles of all American culture (that is, 'mass culture') were regarded as incompatible with their national cultural ideals – the ideals on which they were largely relying for the redefinition of their cultural identities.

Bearing this in mind, I suggest that it becomes easier to understand the hostile response from these European societies faced with the highly enthusiastic reception by their indigenous youth cultures of American mass culture. As we have seen, the rise of the newly-emergent image of the 'teenager' so characteristic of this period, revealed a new social group with disposable income (though to a lesser degree than the disposable income of the majority of their American counterparts) and with a strong tendency to reject the established culture of their parents and to embrace American cultural imports in general, and rock'n'roll in particular. In the light of this, each of the European countries discussed here found themselves helpless in their efforts to defend their sense of national identity from what they saw as the threat from the commercialized nature of American popular culture, which they regarded as inferior and trivial. As we have seen, the response to that threat was not subtle in character, and in all of the countries discussed here clear opposition towards rock'n'roll (and other American cultural products) is expressed by adult society through the use of terms like 'degenerate', and as being part of a larger process of 'Americanization'. The moral panic to which all this led, as we have argued here, can be seen as having two broad aspects: first, the association of rock'n'roll with violence (manifested in the 'delinquent' activities of members of subcultures, most notably acting in gangs); and second, the association of the sensual, 'primitive' physicality of rock'n'roll with the disruption of socially accepted gender norms and roles. None of these countries, in their efforts to redefine their nationhood, could easily accept as compatible with their national character a musical idiom that generates violence, or that subverts the acceptable social behaviour in terms of gender norms.

As we have argued, both of these manifestations of moral panic were the result of a faulty interpretation of the engagement of teenagers with rock'n'roll. Indeed,

rock'n'roll had already made a notable impact in Britain, France, West and East Germany, Greece, and Italy, and, though it was still treated as a dangerous but passing 'fad' by the older generation at the time, an active involvement with it is evident in all the countries in question, albeit mainly in terms of consumption. At this early stage of reception, however, any sense of a creative and productive engagement with the music, to make it a music that was truly 'their own', was yet to emerge. Concerning the reception of rock'n'roll in musical terms during this period there are again more similarities than differences to be noted. With the obvious exception of Britain, the teenagers' fascination with the sounds and the dance styles of rock'n'roll went hand in hand with the inability of the majority of the local youth cultures to relate fully to the 'meaning' of the lyrics due to linguistic barriers. However, the music, the dance and the fashion styles that characterized the rock'n'roll culture were nevertheless enthusiastically embraced. According to Crothers, American cultural idioms allow for this kind of response, since they are by definition 'transparent': 'cultural transparency' in these terms is defined by Scott Robert Olson as 'any textual apparatus that allows audiences to project indigenous values, beliefs, rites and rituals into imported media or the use of those devices'.<sup>140</sup> According to Crothers, this transparent character of American culture allows it to blend easily into other cultures.<sup>141</sup> Nonetheless, I suggest that a convincing case for this cannot be made purely in musical terms in the context of what I have identified as the 'reception period'. Despite the strong appeal that rock'n'roll had for the new youth culture during the early years of its reception in each of these countries, it remained an imported idiom, and, as we shall see in the course of the following chapters, it required more than a mere enthusiasm for the music and the fashion styles that surrounded it in order for it to be fully assimilated, even though it is fair to say that the process of 'blending' appears already to have begun.

The implications of the reception period cannot, however, simply be reduced to what has been discussed above. The societies of the countries in question, however keen they were to preserve their national cultural esteem, were at the same time being increasingly modernized, and were rapidly becoming much more consumer-orientated: in

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<sup>140</sup> Scott Robert Olson as cited in Crothers, p.42

<sup>141</sup> Crothers, p.36

this sense, the profitable potential of rock'n'roll could not easily pass unnoticed. The record industries of Britain, France, West Germany, and Italy had begun releasing rock'n'roll right from the start of what I have identified here as the 'reception period' (ca. 1955/56). The first British, French, West German, and Italian rock'n'roll record releases were anodyne imitations of rock'n'roll, covers of American hits, most of the time characterized by the use of lyrics in their indigenous languages. In the process of doing so, they adapted their first rock'n'rollers to the American model, and were replicating the American idiom in order to make these local productions attractive to the local youth culture. The first rock'n'rollers were manufactured in such ways as to resemble the American performers to the greatest possible extent – even the names they were given were American in many cases. Nonetheless, the substitution of English lyrics for lyrics in the indigenous languages was an action that, though based on efforts to copy the foreign musical idiom, exemplifies the attempts of these European music industries to employ their local languages in order to make the rock'n'roll songs they released sound French, German, or Italian, and further turn the teenagers' attention from the American originals to their own local rock'n'roll releases. These attempts can also be seen in the interesting fact that among the rock'n'roll performers who emerged in these countries during the reception phase there was always one figure who was promoted as the 'local Elvis'; France had Johnny Hallyday, Italy had Adriano Celentano, Germany had Peter Kraus, and Britain had Tommy Steele and Cliff Richard.<sup>142</sup> One might interpret this as the use of a successful reference point of American rock'n'roll – Elvis being the major rock'n'roll star at the time – in order to create equivalents in each country, and make the audience turn to local manifestations of the rock'n'roll culture. In combination with the release of covers of successful American rock'n'roll songs with the use of lyrics in the indigenous languages, the manufacturing and promotion of 'local Elvises' exhibits the initial attempts of the local music industries and broadcasting systems to 'domesticate' rock'n'roll, the efforts to bring it home. These attempts are, nevertheless, more 'instinctive' and less 'calculated' during the years of the reception period.

Just as 'instinctive' was the response to rock'n'roll foregrounded by the release of parodies, like the aforementioned Boris Vian – Henri Salvador's collaborations in France

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<sup>142</sup> Gundle, p.370

with 'Rock and Rollmops' and 'Va t'Faire Cuire un Oeuf, Man', and Renato Carosone's 'Tu Vuò Fà l'Americano' in Italy. To these we could also add the rock'n'roll parodies released by the Goons (The Goon Show) in Britain, like 'Bloodnock's Rock'n'Roll Call' in 1956. These parodies make use of rock'n'roll and its appeal to the youth culture in a humorous way and in this respect, I suggest, they turn rock'n'roll towards satire, or even ridicule. In their use of humour they juxtapose elements of rock'n'roll with elements that relate to their indigenous culture both musically and in terms of sense of humour (in Boris Vian's case a certain intellectual irony, in the case of the Goons the surreal juxtapositions that came to characterize British radio humour in the 1950s). In this sense, the threatening aspects of rock'n'roll are in effect downplayed by being shown to be unable to co-exist with national cultural idioms of humour and irony without being revealed to be trivial. However, the fact that in most of these cases the practitioners of such parodies are not themselves representatives of the youth culture cannot avoid the impression of a kind of patronizing cultural condescension whereby the triviality attributed to this music simply ends up supporting the attitude of the official establishment culture. My reading of these humorous approaches to rock'n'roll complements my discussion in the previous paragraph of issues regarding the first rock'n'roll releases by the music industries of these European countries, and it points to another manifestation of the initial 'instinctive' attempts to domesticate rock'n'roll, this time through its 'taming'. By depriving it of the ability to be considered as dangerous, and threatening, they at the same time downplayed the genuine rebelliousness of young rock'n'roll fans, and, through this, the music's ability at the same time to provoke real feelings of anxiety and unease among adults.

As has been made clear in this chapter, there is little or no evidence of early indigenous production of rock'n'roll records in Greece and East Germany, in the case of the former because its record industry was slow in adopting the new trends, and in the case of the latter because of the restrictions imposed by the authoritarian political regime of the time. However, there is evidence, as I have shown, that, unlike teenagers in France, West Germany, Italy, and even Greece, young people in East Germany did initially respond to their inability to access American rock'n'roll records by forming bands of their own and by playing rock'n'roll outdoors, or in clubs, more often than not through

managing to evade the regulations of the regime. But, as we shall see in the next chapter, the East German state did also begin to attempt to domesticate the music as well. These attempts, more ‘calculated’ than ‘instinctive’ as they are, due to the nature of the regime, coincide with the more ‘calculated’ attempts at domestication which France, West Germany, Greece, and Italy would now start to employ in order to accommodate the idiom, and which will be discussed in detail in the next chapter. This was an institutionally based process – involving the music industry, broadcasting systems, the state, and the press – and this is why I have used the concept of ‘institutionalization’ to identify it. In essence this is a never-ending process, still visible today in the mainstream of the music industry, but which, however, could be said to have had its first major manifestation during the second phase of the process of assimilation of rock’n’roll, and which played a crucial role in the further development of the idiom in each of the five countries considered. Britain, where, as we have seen, the rock idiom had largely escaped the sole authority of the record industry and broadcasting institutions and had by now been ‘assimilated’<sup>143</sup> by indigenous British bands, also has its own version of the institutionalization of rock. However, as we shall see in the next chapter, the way rock’n’roll is treated by the British beat bands of the early 1960s proves to be more important, and becomes eventually highly influential for the rest of the countries under consideration here in terms of their more active engagement with the rock’n’roll culture, and which soon becomes known as ‘rock’.

These are the main issues to be discussed in the next chapter, which will deal with what I have called the ‘imitation phase’: the transformation of rock’n’roll into a pop idiom through its institutionalization (the first stage of imitation), followed by the turning of rock’n’roll into ‘rock’ (the second stage of imitation) through the influence of the British beat bands that in their turn stimulated a more creative engagement on the part of rock’n’roll fans which went beyond the act of mere consumption.

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<sup>143</sup> The complicated notion of assimilation in these terms is one that has been discussed in the Introduction (Chapter 1) – indeed, as much as the British rock bands seem to have assimilated the idiom, my contention is that this was a premature assimilation, and the idiom had not yet entered the musical cultural capital of Britain in the more substantial way that I read as assimilation. This is why I call this stage of British rock music the ‘initial assimilation’.

## Chapter 4

### **‘You’ll see it’s true, someone like me can learn to be like someone like you’: Imitation (ca.1962-67)**

The imitation phase can be crudely separated into two distinct stages, which, after a few years into this period, converge and coexist. What I consider as the first stage of the imitation phase is characterized by the institutionalization of the rock’n’roll idiom by the mainstream, a process which had already begun during the reception period (as seen in the previous chapter), and which took a more formal shape and came to a climax during the imitation phase. The second stage of imitation is the transitional phase experienced by the developing indigenous European rock cultures following the appearance of a specifically British rock idiom and the so-called ‘beat music’ phenomenon of the early 1960s. This second stage of imitation, as we shall see in this chapter, also coincides with the invasion of the American rock scene by British rock and the emergence and diffusion of the new anglo-american rock idiom. This dissemination of the new musical idiom could suggest that it should be treated as a new period of reception. However, I argue that this is not the case, since this new version of rock had itself been influenced by and consisted of characteristic elements of American rock’n’roll which had already been received by and had influenced the other European countries under discussion here. Thus, the musical ground had already been prepared and people in France, Germany, Greece, and Italy were ready to take up the new idiom as imitators by this time, by combining their previous knowledge of rock’n’roll with the new sounds of the British version of rock, and their own previous musical experiences as well. Nonetheless, in order to be better able to understand the different processes that characterize the imitation phase, these two stages will be considered separately here, despite the fact that from a certain point onwards they are actually taking place concurrently.

There are three main issues discussed in this chapter. First, I attempt to clarify the concept of ‘imitation’ in this context, and to indicate why there is a clear distinction to be made between the kinds of passive imitation as ‘copying’ characteristic of the reception period, and the kinds of more consciously creative ‘imitation’ that I see as central to this



period, and which define it. Second, I discuss the institutionalization of rock music and the efforts made to absorb it into the official culture, mostly by ‘cleaning’ it of elements that might be considered provocative or inconsistent with the cultures of the countries in question. And finally, I consider the direction that rock idioms had now taken in each of these countries with reference to the second wave of the ‘imitation’ period and the influence of British beat music.

What is being explored in the present chapter is that through imitating the idiom (not by copying, but by trying to adapt it to their own ‘standards’), the producers and consumers of rock in each country have begun to ‘domesticate’ it further. Although this process is largely music industry-orientated (especially in its first wave, that of institutionalization), I still consider it as a significant phase for the assimilation process that I am proposing here, in the sense that in their efforts towards the institutionalization of rock’n’roll, the music industries and broadcasting systems of these European countries allow us to witness the version of rock’n’roll that was considered appropriate for their national popular music. Frequently the appropriation of foreign cultural idioms can be simplistically misinterpreted as mere ‘copying’. However, this view most accurately describes the kind of rock’n’roll covers released in Britain, France, West Germany, and Italy during the previous phase, that of reception. The processes that underpin the rock music of this period, I suggest, are of a different nature. My decision to name the phase of the process of assimilation with which this chapter is dealing ‘imitation’ therefore calls for further justification, and it is to the clarification of this concept that I now turn.

### **‘Trying to get it like me...can’t get it like me!’: imitation, mimesis, mimicry**

‘Imitation’, a word with numerous synonyms, is a concept related to ideas of ‘mimesis’, ‘mimicry’ and ‘representation’ – terms that are sometimes hard to distinguish between – and of which the roots can be traced back to classical Greek philosophers like Aristotle, Plato, and Isocrates, who used it to describe art as a ‘mimesis, imitation of reality’.<sup>1</sup> At the same time, ‘imitation’ is one of the most frequently used concepts in writings on post-colonialism, post-modernism, and globalization. Of course, as a concept, it has undergone

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<sup>1</sup> Susan Sontag, ‘Against Interpretation’ in *Against Interpretation and Other Essays* (New York: Picador USA, 2001), p.3

various transformations up to the present, and this is why a brief overview of its historical treatment would be useful here, in order to lead to a clarification of the way it is used in this dissertation.

Plato's views on 'mimesis' involve, according to Haskins, a separation of 'mimesis as representation from mimesis as performative imitation and audience identification'.<sup>2</sup> She suggests that for Plato – who is not always straightforward in his usage of the term, something that leads often to polysemy – it sometimes involves the act of mimicking someone, which might lead to the adoption of that other person's identity, something that is considered as negative.<sup>3</sup> Broadly speaking, however, as Schipper puts it, Plato sees mimesis as 'duplicating in another medium the appearances of things which could be experienced outside their representation in art', and, in this sense, if art was imitative, then it was not as highly valued.<sup>4</sup> This can be seen partly as a reason for Plato's view of imitation as, according to Gilbert, incapable of existing without an original, since 'it is nothing in and by itself'.<sup>5</sup> Nonetheless, as Paddison also points out, Plato limits the idea of imitation 'to the notion of art as the imitation of nature', a view of the concept that differs considerably from the one proposed by Aristotle.<sup>6</sup>

Aristotle sees in imitative art more positive aspects, taking a position that suggests that 'an example of it could contain more essence than its apparent original – men's actions and passions in real life'.<sup>7</sup> But what is crucial in Aristotle's use of the concept of mimesis, which also makes him very fundamental for our use of the term here, is that he did not limit its application to art alone. Paddison draws our attention to Aristotle's view, as seen in the *Poetics*, that mimesis is an 'inclination', 'something we all do, which involves also the mimesis of events, actions, people, processes and structures, forms made up of beginnings, middles and ends'.<sup>8</sup> Mimesis from this perspective is something

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<sup>2</sup> Ekaterina V. Haskins, "'Mimesis" between poetics and rhetoric: performance culture and civic education in Plato, Isocrates and Aristotle' in *Rhetoric Society Quarterly*, 30/3 (Summer, 2000), p.7

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, p.8

<sup>4</sup> Edith Watson Schipper, 'Mimesis in the Arts in Plato's Laws' in *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 22/2 (Winter, 1963), p.199

<sup>5</sup> Katherine E. Gilbert, 'Aesthetic imitation and imitators in Aristotle' in *The Philosophical Review*, 45/6 (November, 1936), p.558

<sup>6</sup> Max Paddison, 'Mimesis and the aesthetics of musical expression' in *Music Analysis*, 29/i-ii-iii (2010), p131

<sup>7</sup> Gilbert, pp.558-9

<sup>8</sup> Paddison (2010), p131

inherent to a greater or lesser degree in all humans, and is something that constantly informs our actions and choices. Haskins also stresses Aristotle's view that humans are by nature imitative, and that this virtue is fundamental to their ability to learn.<sup>9</sup> Gilbert concludes that Aristotle never sees imitation as repetition without invention, since the act of imitation is unlikely to create 'the phenomenon of identical twins'.<sup>10</sup> This is also maintained by Paddison, who reads in Aristotle the view of mimesis not as mere imitation, but also as the inclination 'to make and give form to'.<sup>11</sup> Further support for this view is also provided by Maran, who writes that '[m]imesis is an active process in which something new is created, even if it is based on what is previously known, and thus mimesis and creativity are very closely connected'.<sup>12</sup> Consequently, the mere action of mimesis, as Maran argues, would have never been possible without a previous recognition on the part of the imitator that the original is worth imitating, and thus, mimesis is no less a creative activity.<sup>13</sup> To summarise, therefore: I am employing the concept of mimesis here in a very particular, Aristotelian sense, as creation, as a dynamic impulse which comes from the 'inclination' of humans to use elements from their pool of knowledge and their experiences, which they bring into conjunction with conscious or unconscious acts of creative imitation and expression.

The mimetic songs of this imitation phase in the transitional period of rock'n'roll and rock music we are discussing here are to be seen as the result of just such an inclination. Initially, in its institutionalization, rock music was going through a period of conscious efforts on the part of the mainstream and official cultural industries of the European countries under consideration here to create new, acceptable, versions of rock'n'roll that could be accepted as suitable for these contexts. In order to reach to this stage, a crucial previous knowledge of the idiom had first to be achieved: indeed, only after specific elements of rock'n'roll had been 'learnt' (during the reception period) in these countries, could they then start to be accommodated in this way. Trivial as these might sound, and commercialized in nature as they might have been, I consider the imitative musical results of these efforts to be especially 'creative', as well as informative

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<sup>9</sup> Haskins, p.26

<sup>10</sup> Katherine E. Gilbert, p.561

<sup>11</sup> Paddison (2010), p132

<sup>12</sup> Maran, p.211

<sup>13</sup> Ibid, p.201

for the music that was regarded as suitable for these European countries during this period. I shall give some examples of such songs later in this chapter. A somewhat different reading can be applied to the second stage of the imitation phase: the active engagement of the youth culture with the rock idiom as it was by now being presented through the British version of rock, where we see a mimetic involvement with it that was not 'imitative' in the sense that defines its institutionalization, in that it is not static. It is unlike the institutionalized imitations of rock'n'roll, since it does not maintain a 'representation' of it in the use of any specific framework concerning what this music should, or should not sound like, in order to be compatible with the new European contexts in which it found itself. Instead, by being more creatively engaged with the idiom (though one could suggest that the mere act of *playing* rock'n'roll by the teenagers themselves was a mimetic action re-enacting the British bands' own original approach to the idiom), the European rock audience, as will be seen in this chapter, was now starting to adjust – though uneasily at this point – to the rock musical elements with which they had been interacting since the early years of the reception period. These musical idioms, therefore, had existed in their pool of knowledge long enough not to sound entirely foreign and unfamiliar – to engage actively with them is, I suggest, something that stems from the characteristic human 'inclination' to imitate elements from their environment discussed above. We will make both of these cases more clearly later in this chapter.

A term that is often used as relevant to mimesis is that of mimicry. However, mimicry should be seen to represent something different from mimesis in the sense that, as Maran suggests drawing on Graham Huggan, mimicry is seen within the discourses of anthropology and postcolonialism as an imitation 'used to disturb, ridicule or subordinate the imitated object or phenomenon'.<sup>14</sup> Mimicry, according to Bhabha, should always be considered to be incorporating the sense of 'ambivalence', the result of an 'almost the same but not quite'; 'the representation of a difference that is itself a process of disavowal'. He goes on: 'Mimicry is, thus, the sign of a double articulation; a complex strategy of reform, regulation and discipline, which "appropriates" the Other as it visualizes power'.<sup>15</sup> Papanikolaou, also drawing on Bhabha sheds further light on the

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid, p.197, n.3

<sup>15</sup> Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* ( London and New York: Routledge, 1994), p.86

concept, stating that '[m]imicry produces writing, repeats rather than represents, and thus introduces a new modal framework...brings along an endless series of repetitions: it inaugurates the metonymical moment which destabilizes the original, the authentic and the (r)evolutionary. Within this strategy the original loses its right over the process'.<sup>16</sup> In this sense, much of the material I am using in this chapter comes out of a process more closely linked to that of 'mimicry' – though again this is not absolute – in all the imitative manifestations of rock that could be seen as attempts at disempowering the original, and thus to present themselves as more appropriate and creative. Drawing on Lacan, Bhabha puts emphasis on mimicry's similarities with camouflage. He writes: '[i]ts threat [...] comes from the prodigious and strategic production of conflictual, fantastic, discriminatory "identity effects" in the play of a power that is elusive because it hides no essence, no "itself"'.<sup>17</sup> This play of power is in a way directly relevant to the rock approaches of the imitation period that this chapter is discussing. More specifically, we can again turn to Adorno who, according to Feld, views mimesis as a 'repressed desire, a longing for the other, while regressively controlling it so as to bury its history forever'; the act of mimesis is thus representing in that respect the struggle between 'liberation and repression ... the janus face of social history'.<sup>18</sup> What could be a better description than this for the mimetic acts both of the institutionalization process, as well as the beat booms that develop a while later? The European music industries saw in rock'n'roll the success, the profit, and the ability of the fresh sound to engage teenage audiences – this is the aspect of it they longed for. They also saw danger in its character, and its representation of America, and aspects of it that were incompatible with their own cultural ideals – these they needed to repress, to conceal. In bringing these desires and fears together, the new version of rock they created was a creative imitation that was liberating (in that they could now try the success of their new version of rock) and repressive (in that in doing so they changed the original sounds in important ways, repressing rock'n'rolls' initial character). In different ways this applied to the imitation by the actively involved rock fans, who were now producing their version of beat music: the 'longing for the other' is

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<sup>16</sup> Dimitris Papanikolaou, *Singing Poets: Literature and Popular Music in France and Greece* (London: Legenda, 2007), p.110

<sup>17</sup> Bhabha, p.90

<sup>18</sup> Steven Feld, 'Pygmy POP: a genealogy of schizophonic mimesis' in *Yearbook for Traditional Music*, 28 (1996), p.16

more than obvious in these terms – what should be stressed is that, by their musical activities these imitative bands tried to *become* the other. The passive attitude of admiring, and longing, has now become the active effort to achieve, to reach. Thus, from one perspective this creates the impression that the imitation of the beat bands’ musically active approach, represses the same influence of these British bands, as it liberates the newly-formed bands in France, Germany, Greece, and Italy in their efforts to *become* these bands themselves, and, thus, downplays in a sense their significance. Though the bands of this period were accused of ‘aping’ the British bands, I argue in fact that they were undergoing important creative processes in the context of their own musical activities.

It is with this conception of imitation as mimesis that I came to identify the period this chapter is concerned with as the ‘imitation period’, since it is during this period when obvious imitative approaches make explicit the importance of ‘imitation’ as a step on the route to assimilation. It is the taking up of the new idiom but in strategic (see institutionalization) and prodigious (see imitation of beat music) ways (to use Bhabha’s terms) as the conscious production of new idioms – albeit mimetic – that will be aligned to the national culture of the people that are the imitators. And yet, as will be made clearer within this chapter, this is a ‘play of power’ that does not bring the result required, in being one that carries no substantial ‘essence, no “itself”’, and, thus, no identity to be preserved. As we shall see in later chapters, this is what mainly separates the hybridization of the rock idioms in this phase with the one that comes later in the assimilation phase, where the ‘self’ is strongly felt, since only then, in the achievement of assimilation, will a clear sense of the self and of the other exist, which will allow for a more assertive positioning of the one within the other, in such a way that both of them will be able to co-exist in the formation of a new identity, a new self.

In this discussion of imitation – which might appear to be bringing us full circle – I want to draw attention to two things that I consider to be key points for the discussion that follows in this chapter. First, the tendency of humans to be influenced and to imitate is one that is ascribed to us by the mere fact of being human (this is something recognized by Aristotle in his account of mimesis in *The Poetics*). And second, that the way rock’n’roll idioms are being treated during this ‘imitation phase’ is more aligned to

the idea of mimicry, in which the imitator is taking up the idiom both as a camouflage and also as a way to exercise power over it. In the process of institutionalization I suggest that it can mainly be seen in terms of ‘camouflage’, mimicking something and ‘domesticating’ it in order to protect one’s own social identity. In any case, what we are witnessing in the musical evidence of this phase are imitations of rock’n’roll idioms as these are exemplified by the conscious actions of the imitators’ involvement with it. Although these kinds of imitations – which, as I have emphasized earlier, are *conscious* in character within what I have called the ‘imitation period’ – constitute an important step *towards* the assimilation of the rock idioms in the way this is suggested in this dissertation, they still remain some distance from the actual achievement of assimilation, since, from my perspective, the real achievement of assimilation involves ‘imitations’ that are by definition *unconscious* and *intuitive* in character.

Thus, the words ‘imitation’, ‘mimesis’, and ‘mimicry’, as well as the relevant term ‘representation’ can take on complex meanings and can create confusion if used without clarification. In this case, an entirely firm clarification might be difficult to achieve – this is mostly to do with confusion that these terms, almost synonyms, can still create, due to difficulties in translation. For example, as Halliwell argues, the concept of mimesis as used in ancient Greece is not to be confusingly translated as equivalent to the concept of ‘imitation’ as this is found in modern English.<sup>19</sup> This position is also supported by Trench, when he states that various scholars used the concept of mimesis to mean ‘representation’ rather than ‘imitation’, and because of the continuous use of the word ‘imitation’ it came to be favoured as the translation.<sup>20</sup> According to this argument, ‘[t]he Greek word *μίμησις* has a great range of signification beyond that of the English word “imitation”, or that of the corresponding words in other languages’.<sup>21</sup> Indeed, mimesis could have provided a more accurate title for this chapter since, as the reader is likely to have noticed, I consider the musical actions described here as more informed by mimetic inclinations (with reference to Aristotle). However, in recognition of the actual musical result and the consciousness with which the musical production (both

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<sup>19</sup> Stephen Halliwell, ‘Aristotelian mimesis reevaluated’ in *Journal of the History of Philosophy*, 28/4 (October 1990), p.488

<sup>20</sup> W. F. Trench, ‘Mimesis in Aristotle’s Poetics’ in *Hermathena*, 23/48 (1993), p.5

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid*, p.8

institutionalized and amateur) took place in all the five countries during this phase, I persist in my initial scheme, and in avoidance of any confusion I shall now make clear that the term ‘imitation’ is used in this chapter to describe mimetic creations of an idiom that has already been learnt (it having been present in these countries for some years now), but also imitation as aligned with the notion of mimicry of a foreign idiom (for its origins in a distant culture are still strongly recognised, and actively downplayed).

Finally, it is worth pointing out that in this chapter we are looking at ways in which Britain, France, West and East Germany, Greece, and Italy, produced their imitative approaches to the rock idioms. The importance of them being different countries, surrounded by realities that – though resembling each other – are different in very fundamental ways, should not pass unmentioned. Bhabha has written that:

In the restless drive for cultural translation, hybrid sites of meaning open up a cleavage in the language of culture which suggests that the similitude of the *symbol* as it plays across cultural sites must not obscure the fact that repetition of the *sign* is, in each specific social practice, both different and differential.<sup>22</sup>

Bhabha’s words raise the idea of difference in different contexts, and it is with this argument in mind that one is capable of speaking of musical results that are not ones of mere copying. As we are to see, the same musical idioms are the influences and the ones that are being imitated by all the countries in question. The ‘ideological’ processes that underlay the imitative approaches (for both of the imitation stages) are also more or less the same in each country, namely the process of institutionalization at one level, and the will to actively engage with the music in the beat boom, at a different level. However, despite these similarities, the musical result is not the same in these five countries: thus, the repetition of the *sign* can be seen to take a different shape in each context. Hence, as much as the musical result in each of these five countries might resemble closely the sound of the original, the notable differences between songs of Britain, France, Germany, Greece, and Italy confirm the claim that the songs of this period, mimetic as they are, are to be seen as anything but copies (this will be further justified below). Theories of imitation, mimesis, and mimicry agree: Katherine Gilbert stresses Aristotle’s high regard for imitative art in saying that ‘the relationship of resemblance involved in imitation does

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<sup>22</sup> Bhabha, p.163



not for him imply the monotony of bare repetition...Artistic imitation is for him invention...Aristotle is careful to explain that when like meets like in any significant fashion in the universe of nature or art we do not have the phenomenon of identical twins'.<sup>23</sup> Papanikolaou's approach to mimicry presents a similar idea, seeing it as the imitation of the Other, but not its exact copy; as always carrying the element of difference.<sup>24</sup> Mimicry, as he also suggests, 'always engages in a poetics of the surplus; it produces itself as an imitation, introducing the original as arranged, split, negotiated, and, in the end, not original at all'.<sup>25</sup> It is this thought that leads us to the next section, in which the domestication of the idiom through its intense institutionalization is discussed. Indeed, during this first stage of the imitation phase, the ways in which the record industries of each country treat the rock'n'roll idiom is mimetic: through its institutionalization they tried to align the idiom to the acceptable and marketable norms of their countries, and through that action they presented their own, 'original', national versions of it. In doing so they at the same time demonstrated a dismissal of the American original as such and deprived it of any rebellious association that was ascribed to it during the previous phase.

### **1. First stage of imitation: the process of institutionalization**

The process of institutionalization can be read from the perspective of 'cultural appropriation, cultural co-optation, or cultural exploitation', described by Cushman as 'the ways in which dominant classes in capitalist societies negotiate and maintain hegemony by transforming and diffusing the revolutionary potential of the culture of subordinate classes'.<sup>26</sup> For the music industries, the official broadcasting systems, and the cultural elites of Britain, France, Germany, Greece, and Italy, the fact that rock'n'roll had already been through a process of institutionalization in its place of origin, the USA, before reaching their countries, seemed to be of minimum relevance. Indeed, as has already been mentioned, the rock'n'roll that the American cultural industry was exporting was a product of the domestication of a grassroots idiom that was increasingly gaining

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<sup>23</sup> Katherine E. Gilbert, p.561

<sup>24</sup> Papanikolaou, p.110

<sup>25</sup> Ibid, p.113

<sup>26</sup> Thomas Cushman, 'Rich rastas and communist rockers: a comparative study of the origin, diffusion and defusion of revolutionary musical codes' in *Journal of Popular Culture* (1991), p.18

popularity among the newly developed American youth market. However, as has been discussed in the previous chapter, on its arrival in the countries under consideration here it was still perceived by European adults and enjoyed by the youth culture as a rebellious cultural idiom. Thus, in order to be accepted, it called for further domestication: one that was more ‘calculated’ than the efforts we saw taking place in the reception period. It is a historical fact that many idioms that begin their life outside the mainstream industries and manage to achieve broad publicity are eventually taken up, used, and exploited by the music industry, being, in the process, ‘neutralized’.<sup>27</sup> Although similar processes had been taking place before the emergence of rock’n’roll, what this specific period reveals which is unique and marks the beginning of many similar instances to come at later stages, is an institutionalization that is more systematic, and to which many factors contribute. In addition, it is an institutionalization that is not taking place within a limited locality, but at many places simultaneously.

Nevertheless, the process and extent of institutionalization varies in each context according to the particular situations that make it possible and which differ from country to country: the availability of technology and the economic situation that makes ownership of it possible, the functioning of the broadcasting system, state regulations concerning broadcasts, and the agents of institutionalization (important figures like radio disc jockeys, television show presenters, rock’n’roll stars) who work systematically towards reaching a wide teenage audience. But in order to be able to make a comparison between the institutionalization processes of these European countries during the ‘imitation period’, it needs to be acknowledged that all of them had developed a framework that *allowed* for the institutionalization to take place. Indeed, the institutionalization of rock’n’roll in the way that is going to be described here would not have been possible if the countries had not by now developed the technology, music industry, media, and broadcasting systems required to be able to support the production and diffusion of a locally produced musical idiom. This development, as has already been mentioned, had already begun in the immediate post-war years and was well under way during the previous phase, that of the reception of rock’n’roll. It is during these years, though, that all the technological and mass communication developments in national

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<sup>27</sup> One only needs to think of, apart from rock’n’roll, the later examples of punk, hip hop, rap, etc.

contexts will have the greater influence on the course of rock'n'roll in each of these countries. The discussion that follows, which deals with the institutionalization of rock in each of these countries should therefore be read as an extension of these technological and media developments that occurred during the previous phase, in the years of the reception period (roughly between 1956 to 1962). The recognition of this allows for the connections between the two phases to be made more strongly, while also showing that the fact that institutionalization happened during the imitation period is the logical outcome of developments that began during the reception period.<sup>28</sup> I suggest therefore that the emergence of the 'teenager' and the rise of consumerism that characterized the reception period (as seen in the previous chapter) are to be seen as tightly connected with the technological advancements that allowed for the production, distribution and consumption of rock'n'roll in Britain, France, West Germany, Greece, and Italy. Seen in these terms, it can be argued that it was the combination of the two that prepared the ground for the more organized and 'calculated' treatment of rock'n'roll that led to more idiosyncratic (albeit commercialized) indigenous versions of the idiom in each of these countries. The significance of what I have called the 'institutionalization stage' is that it provides us with evidence of the first attempts at creating national versions of rock-influenced popular music, even if these were not yet what could be called a spontaneous creation of the rock'n'roll youth audiences themselves.

**'You're gonna be institutionalized – you'll come out brainwashed with bloodshot eyes': domesticating rock'n'roll culture**

As was seen in the previous chapter, already by the end of what I have named the 'reception period', rock'n'roll had made its presence felt as an idiom that was no longer to be seen as fad. Rock'n'roll had, it seemed, in Britain, France, Germany, Greece, and Italy, arrived to stay. The realization of this, in combination with the recognition of the commercial potential of rock'n'roll, as well as the desire to reduce the impact of its rougher and more dangerous elements on the youth audience, led the official, institutional

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<sup>28</sup> There is no space here for a detailed description of these developments, but it is worth pointing out that during the years of the reception period all the countries considered here were largely aligned with the technological advancements that related to the popular music production and consumption, while they had also developed further their record industries and broadcasting systems, albeit to varying degrees.

cultures of these countries to what I argue was the ‘institutionalization’ of rock’n’roll. The process of institutionalization is mainly to be seen in the fact that the music industries were engaged more actively in the production of rock’n’roll, while, at the same time, their version of rock’n’roll was one that aligned with what was considered appropriate for the popular music of each of these five countries, as well as being designed to be compatible with the already existent popular music styles that pre-dated the appearance of the new musical idiom. This is not to deny that this process converted rock’n’roll into a pop idiom,<sup>29</sup> and in turn sparked the first arguments over what was soon later to become the distinction between ‘pop triviality’ and ‘rock authenticity’ which were to characterize rock culture for a long period of its heyday.

‘Pop’, as Young puts it, ‘is the culture of imperial socialisation, of institutionalised religion, consensus and commerce’.<sup>30</sup> This view very accurately describes the transformation of rock’n’roll during this phase in each of the countries under consideration, and which is not to be seen as restricted solely to the activities of the recording industry and the music business itself. Institutionalization should rather be seen as extending beyond the limits of music into efforts to create a wider rock’n’roll ‘culture’ as a whole, supported and promoted by a multitude of agents and institutions like radio, television, the press, and even the nation state. It is to the discussion of these that I now turn, in order to describe the cultural framework within which this new, transformed, version of rock’n’roll will find its ‘home’ in each of these countries. It has to be remembered, nevertheless, that this process did not start happening at a single moment in time, but that, as has already been mentioned, in most cases it began being evident during the reception period. Radio and TV shows with rock’n’roll at their core began being broadcast in several of these countries during the late 1950s: for example, the TV shows ‘Six-Five Special’ (1957) and ‘Oh Boy!’ (1958) in Britain, and the radio show ‘Salut les copains’ (1959) in France. In other countries rock’n’roll started being covered in the teenage press: *Bravo* in West Germany, which appeared in 1956, started incorporating popular music, whereas on a more limited scale, Greek publications like *Pantheon*,

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<sup>29</sup> Indeed, rock’n’roll had already been through a process of institutionalization in the USA prior to its reach in the countries, but it should be remembered that during the first years of its existence in Britain, France, Germany, Greece, and Italy it was considered a rebellious musical style.

<sup>30</sup> Young (2011), p.181

*Fantazio* and *Ellinikos Vorras*, while not aimed at a teenage readership, started incorporating issues concerning popular music in 1961, with *Ellinikos Vorras* presenting a hit chart as well.<sup>31</sup> In Italy, it was through cinema that rock'n'roll entered the mainstream culture, with films like *I ragazzi del juke-box* (1959), *Urlatori alla sbarra* (1959) and *I teddy boys della canzone* (1960).<sup>32</sup> Apart from the first National Rock Festival in 1957 and the chart list that was founded in that same year, the institutionalization of rock'n'roll in Italy was further strengthened by the inclusion of rock'n'roll songs in the San Remo Festival in 1961, with two competing yet similar renditions of the song '24 000 Baci' by Celentano and Little Tony which won second prize.<sup>33</sup> In Greece it is also through mainstream cinema that we see the initial attempts at 'domestication' in the depiction of the teenager fascination with rock'n'roll as an obvious characteristic of Greek society of the period. *Tria paidia voliotika* (Three young men from Volos) (1957), *I thia apo to Chicago* (The aunt from Chicago) (1957) are good examples of this.<sup>34</sup> East Germany, as was to be expected, left no space for such cultural endeavours, though the state's introduction of the *Lipsi* dance that we saw in the previous chapter could be interpreted as something like a rather clumsy and unsuccessful attempt at the domestication of rock'n'roll. Seen in these terms, rock'n'roll was already being explored during the reception period in ways that would accommodate both the teenagers' demands and the cultural industries' commercial interests: teenagers were enjoying a musical culture borrowed from another context, but which was at the same time something specifically their own – keeping adult society at arm's length – whereas the music industry was making money from a new fad that was very profitably combined with the new consumer power of the youth culture. The difference between the accommodation that happens in the reception period and the one discussed here lies in the fact that during the imitation period the process of institutionalization is taking place in a more 'calculated' way and on a much larger scale. It is also a broader phenomenon, since simultaneous efforts are made in all the countries this study is dealing with to convert rock'n'roll into 'family entertainment'.

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<sup>31</sup> Mpozinis, p.202

<sup>32</sup> Gundle, p.375

<sup>33</sup> Ibid, p.376

<sup>34</sup> Mpozinis, p.161: It is important to remember that cinema was a prime medium of entertainment in Greece since the early 1910s.

To begin elaborating further on the institutionalized efforts of the cultural industries of these European countries to domesticate rock'n'roll, it is worth looking at similar processes undergone by rock'n'roll in its birthplace, the USA, both prior to its export but mainly after it in the second half of the 1950s. The first way in which the process of institutionalization manifests itself, and which is by nature the most visible, is in the efforts put into making the image of rock'n'roll seem more harmless and less rebellious. As pointed out earlier, this had already begun taking place in the USA during the early years of rock'n'roll, when, as Ford puts it,

The reaction to the new sound was often not favorable. New Yorkers like Frank Sinatra called rock and roll 'the martial music of juvenile delinquents' while the white music establishment searched frantically for clean-looking singers to cover the hits of the original artists, especially the black ones.<sup>35</sup>

As we have seen in the previous chapter, a similar negative position was held by the adult generation and the official cultures of these five European countries towards American rock'n'roll who had now started 'institutionalizing' the 'institutionalized', producing covers of the American 'original' rock'n'roll songs with native performers who were turned into images of 'good boys' and 'good girls'. In the USA, there had been major attempts at institutionalizing and cleaning up rock'n'roll. These 'cleaning up' attempts, according to Ford, can be identified more clearly in Philadelphia in Dick Clark's *American Standband*, a national television show that went on air in 1958, and many rock'n'roll fan magazines, as well as the promotion of local youth figures like Frankie Avalon and Fabian as stars of this 'clean', and almost solely white rock'n'roll idiom, which Ford names 'Disney rock'.<sup>36</sup> The 'trilogy' of radio/television shows, rock'n'roll-related press, and neutralized rock'n'roll performers (who sang clean rock'n'roll songs) constitute the main agents of institutionalization process.

In a direct parallel with the aforementioned *American Standband* television show, the British television show *Ready, Steady, Go*,<sup>37</sup> broadcast from 1963 until 1966, was one important agent of the process of institutionalization in Britain, which, although promoting the 'clean' image of rock'n'roll, it nonetheless featured some of the most

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<sup>35</sup> Ford, p.459

<sup>36</sup> Ibid, p.461

<sup>37</sup> Harker, p.92

important rock stars of the 1960s. Britain is a somewhat complicated case in this context: as we have seen, rock'n'roll idioms had already gone through a process of 'assimilation' in a grassroots club culture that was now about to enter the mainstream, as is to be seen in the release of the Beatles' 'Love Me Do' in 1962 with which we marked the end of the 'reception period'. Britain in this respect is also the first representative of the co-existence of a musical idiom both in the official culture in a web of 'institutionalization', and also in creative responses, in the work of the very first song-writing rock groups. Hence, early assimilation and the existence of a more active and creative youth culture that was increasingly gaining momentum should not mislead us into believing that 'imitation through institutionalization' was taking place to a lesser extent in Britain – on the contrary, with cultural industries that were more advanced than in the rest of the countries we are looking at here, one might rightly expect that processes of institutionalization were taking place in Britain extensively, processes that were evident well into the second half of the 1960s. In fact, Cloonan specifically focuses on the year 1967, which he sees as a key year for British rock; as he suggests, 1967 was the year of the summer of love, and also the year when 'swinging London' (with the culture of fashion and music that so characterized this 1960s phenomenon) had its heyday.<sup>38</sup> Swinging London's importance can be seen in Chambers's account of the fashion style related popular music of the time. He writes,

Around 1964-5 there occurred a decisive shift in the economy of public imagery surrounding pop music. Pop stopped being a spectacular but peripheral event, largely understood to be associated with teenage working-class taste, and became the central symbol of fashionable, metropolitan, British culture. It had moved from being a show business mutant to becoming a symbolisation of style.<sup>39</sup>

The fact that this style had been made acceptable, incorporated, promoted and commercialized by the fashion industries, is nothing but another powerful indication of rock culture's institutionalization. Nevertheless, the major manifestation of institutionalization in Britain at the time also takes place in 1967, when all the pirate

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<sup>38</sup> Cloonan (1996), p.5

<sup>39</sup> Chambers (1985), p.57

radio stations that had been active in Britain were forced to close,<sup>40</sup> and Radio 1 was launched. The establishment of Radio 1, operated as it was by the BBC, was the prime example of the efforts of institutionalization made by the British broadcasting industries: it is a paradox, really, that the BBC was so late in responding so actively to the musical tastes of the teenage audience, considering how effective rock'n'roll had been for the youth culture for the whole decade preceding the station's launch. One could see the realization of the necessity of responding to this audience more actively as a result of the huge appeal of foreign radio stations (Radio Luxembourg, Radio Monte Carlo, as well as the pirate stations) and the wider audiences these reached. Harker describes the music broadcasts of Radio 1 as 'a pale and emasculated version of an already deteriorating original, using former pirate personnel'.<sup>41</sup> Hence, it should be obvious that Radio 1 did not simply respond to the music tastes of the teenagers: rather, in the way it functioned, it actually assisted in promoting what was considered as the appropriate teenage music tastes. Radio 1, from the time of its inception, aimed to be Britain's most important popular music institutionalization medium, and it was gaining importance during a time when British state control over the production and dissemination of popular culture was increasing.<sup>42</sup> Publications like the *Melody Maker* (first published in 1926, it was an important publication for the dissemination of jazz music in the country – although late in dealing with rock'n'roll, it had a significant impact when it began incorporating rock'n'roll matters in 1958), and *New Musical Express* (first published in 1952 and concerned with popular music; also, it presented in 1952 the first official British 'hit parade')<sup>43</sup> assisted the process of institutionalization in Britain, although none of them seems to have played the role in institutionalization that the press in other countries like France played.

In his account of the institutionalization of rock'n'roll in France, Looseley writes that: '[o]nce the popularity of the new music proved to be more than a fad, record companies and promoters were quick to commercialize it beyond the relatively small niche of disaffected rockers rerouting it into the innocuous comedy of the twist and

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<sup>40</sup> Radio Caroline (the first and most influential British pirate radio station, active since 1964), Wonderful Radio (active since 1964), and Swinging Radio England (active since 1967) etc.

<sup>41</sup> Harker, p.80

<sup>42</sup> Cloonan (1996), p.5

<sup>43</sup> Gillett, p.254



thence into the anodyne French version of pop known as *le yéyé*.<sup>44</sup> My position that it was not only commercial potential, but a combination of different factors (with commercial potential being just one, albeit of specific importance) that led to processes of institutionalization has already been clearly stated at several points in this dissertation so far, and does not need to be taken further here. The important point to be taken from Looseley's words is that a rigorous institutionalization was evident and strongly felt in France and that it resulted in a musical idiom – and, as we are to see here – a cultural idiom that had a characteristic name as well: *le yéyé*. Even more than in musical terms, in most cases institutionalization was seen to be taking place just as much in visual and 'ideological' terms. Specifically in France, this process of 'cleaning up' the image of rock'n'roll was initially evident in respect to the style and the image of the rock stars and their audiences and in the way these were depicted in the youth press. Looseley suggests that, since the first visible rock'n'roll fans in France were boys between fifteen and twenty years old 'with conscription into the Algerian War hanging over them', and pop stars like Danyel Gérard, Johnny Hallyday, and Eddy Mitchell having, just like Elvis, already been called up, this created the perfect opportunity for photographs of a 'new look of clean-cut solemnity before the flag'.<sup>45</sup> In addition, since adolescent girls were also attracted to the music, female singers were duly launched, an action that helped to 'retrieve rock'n'roll from its associations of [sic] male delinquency'.<sup>46</sup> Sylvie Vartan, Sheila, France Gall, Françoise Hardy, the English Petula Clark and others 'were projected as skittish, fun-loving and wholesome',<sup>47</sup> associated with an image of the ideal French young female. At the same time, the 'manufacture' and promotion of a wave of equally innocuous-looking boy singers like Claude François, Adamo, Frank Alamo created a parallel for the young male image. It was through the use of these performers' success among the French youth audience that the French music industries would project their idea of rock'n'roll culture: this included the stars and fans' image and style, as well as their behaviour.

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<sup>44</sup> Looseley (2), p.34

<sup>45</sup> Looseley (1), p.27

<sup>46</sup> Ibid

<sup>47</sup> Ibid

Assisting the French effort to ‘clean up rock’ were both the radio and the press. Indeed, as Looseley points out, Europe 1 had already launched ‘Salut les Copains’ in the summer of 1959 – thus, before the end of the ‘reception period’. As a radio show, ‘Salut les Copains’, which proved to be very successful with the French youth audience, revealed from a very early stage its aspiration to give an institutional identity to the new music. This aspiration was not only complemented, but was also reinforced, by the spin-off teen print magazine *Salut les Copains*, launched in June 1962 (the very beginning of the ‘imitation phase’ as described in this chapter) by Frank Ténor and Daniel Filipacchi, the ‘DJs’ of the radio show ‘Salut les Copains’.<sup>48</sup> *Salut les Copains* was a magazine that responded directly to French rock’n’roll youth fans, and in its pages one could see this connection clearly in the discussions of news concerning French popular music stars, printed lyrics of successful songs, as well as a chart list created by readers’ votes.<sup>49</sup> At the same time, it also featured issues that had a broader interest for its readers. As far as France is concerned, it is in the pages of *Salut les Copains* where the institutionalization of French rock’n’roll is most vigorously revealed. This view is also supported by Warne, who states that it was the success of *Salut les Copains* that marks the second phase of rock’n’roll in France.<sup>50</sup> The domestication efforts put forward in *Salut les Copains* are particularly straightforward: firstly, the magazine was aimed at a unisex and inclusive readership that was not marked by differences in age and social position. According to Tinker, it aimed to appeal both to a variety of age groups within the youth culture (covering the whole span of the teenage years), as well as to a variety of youth lifestyles (for example, ranging from teenage school children to young workers), in order to create a ‘general youth identity’.<sup>51</sup> As Tinker goes on to write, ‘SLC was especially instrumental

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<sup>48</sup> Mat Pires, ‘The popular music press’ in *Popular Music in France from Chanson to Techno: Culture, Identity and Society*, Dauncey, Hugh and Cannon, Steve (eds.), (Hants: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2003), p.87

<sup>49</sup> Looseley (i), p.29

<sup>50</sup> Chris Warne, ‘Music, Youth and Moral Panics in France, 1960 to Present’ in *Historia Actual Online* (2006), p.53: though Warne does not clearly define this second phase in the same respect as I do here, his recognition of the distinction between the pre-*Salut les Copains* era of French rock’n’roll and the rock’n’roll era connected with *Salut les Copains* itself, is one of specific importance for my arguments here.

<sup>51</sup> Chris Tinker, ‘Shaping youth in Salut les copains’ in *Modern and Contemporary France*, 15/3 (2007), p.295

in bringing the new social category of youth to public prominence'.<sup>52</sup> The most important characteristic of the magazine, which reveals the dominant ideology underlying the institutionalization of French rock'n'roll, was a philosophy that all pop fans were part of a unifying, inclusive culture where they were all *copains*, mates, and were united by their passion for music. In Looseley's words: '[t]he term [*copains*] spoke of wholesome friendships between boys and girls and an apolitical culture of classless youths passionate about music that advocated nothing more harmful than vigorous fun'.<sup>53</sup> The particularly important point that needs to be made here is that the link between the ideology of French rock'n'roll and the idea of a culture of *copains* was not confined to members of the audience, but was extended to the major figures of rock'n'roll as well. It was not only the founders of *Salut les Copains*, Ténor and Filipacchi, who projected themselves as *copains*, but, most importantly, the stars themselves were also presented in these terms.

The success of *Salut les Copains* prompted the release of numerous imitative publications,<sup>54</sup> increasing in the process the power of the press as the main vehicle for the institutionalization of French rock'n'roll. Indeed, as Warne also points out, the different image that French institutions were now associating with rock'n'roll is most powerfully manifested in ways in which the French rock'n'roll stars were depicted in the pages of *Salut les Copains* and the French press in general.<sup>55</sup> As Warne goes on to suggest, older, black-leathered aggressive photos of Hallyday and others were now being replaced by shots of them in domestic environments with smiling or wistful expressions, in relaxed casual clothes, or in clothes associated with success.<sup>56</sup> Thus, the success of rock'n'roll stars, largely alarming as it was during the reception period (as seen in the previous chapter), was now being dealt with actively as a positive feature of rock'n'roll itself. The case of Hallyday, the most prominent French rock'n'roller since the period of reception, clearly manifests this, most notably in the different way with which he was now presented in the press, but not least in the way he was dealt with by the cultural and

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<sup>52</sup> Ibid

<sup>53</sup> Looseley (i), p.29

<sup>54</sup> Ibid: *Bonjour les Amis*, *Age Tendre*, and also relevant publications from institutions that were oppositional to rock'n'roll: the Communist Party (*Nous les garçons et les filles*) and the Catholic Church (*J2 Jeunesse* for boys and *J2 magazine* for girls). Although both of these organizations were not supportive of the post-war American imports, they nevertheless helped in 'pop's implantation in France'.

<sup>55</sup> Warne, p.53

<sup>56</sup> Ibid

music industries in general. Looseley summarizes this situation very effectively: ‘rough diamonds like Johnny were swiftly polished up and transformed into the voice of the much more docile *yéyé*, whose ideology was that all young people, regardless of social position, were brought together as *copains* by the charmingly innocent love of pop music’.<sup>57</sup> Specifically Hallyday, as Tinker maintains, was depicted in the pages of *Salut les Copains* as exemplary, as a figure aligned to the ideal French *copain*. This comes in stark contrast to the way other, more controversial performers were dealt with in the magazine. Vince Taylor, in particular, was often presented as a figure who was ‘controversial, if not dangerous’, and, thus, as an example to be avoided.<sup>58</sup> French youth used the press as an important medium for the expression of their passion for popular music, thus this new image of rock’n’roll stars, as shown in the pages of the most successful magazine of its period in France, played a very important role for the youth culture’s perception of rock’n’roll music and its associated style and culture. The particularly ‘conservative’ way in which rock’n’roll was depicted in the music press during this time should nevertheless be seen in the light of state regulation of the media. As Tinker points out, there was heavy regulation of the media in France, clearly evident in the July 1949 law that had as its purpose to ‘moralize’ the press directed at a youth readership:<sup>59</sup> This is important in that it makes explicit a significant factor of institutionalization that has been hovering over our discussion up to now. Indeed, institutionalization, though obvious in commercial terms as treated by the music industry, broadcast systems, and the press, is nevertheless not to be considered without taking account of the contribution of the state in the regulation of the media and the position of the nation-state towards cultural products in general. Institutionalization, it needs to be remembered, is the effect of the establishment on cultural products that have been considered ‘subversive’, ‘rebellious’, or associated with connotations that made them incapable of being absorbed within the official culture as they were. To be deemed incapable in these terms, however, means that they did not fit when juxtaposed with ideas of how acceptable cultural idioms ought to be: the framework of such a comparison is

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<sup>57</sup> Looseley (2005), p.202

<sup>58</sup> Tinker (2007), p.304: the specific approach towards Hallyday is strong during the period this chapter is dealing with, but there is a change of approach towards him by 1975 where negative aspects of his biography are stated in the magazine.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid, p.299

built by the establishment, including both the official culture, broadcasting institutions, and, not least, the state and its regulations. It is within this kind of framework, as we have seen earlier, that the institutionalization process was taking place within each of these five countries.

In Britain, as mentioned before, institutionalization was most strongly felt in music broadcasts both on television with *Ready, Steady, Go!*, as well as radio with the launch of Radio 1. In France, it was through the radio show 'Salut les Copains' but, even more so, through its press extension, *Salut les Copains*, where it was manifested even more clearly. In each case we have looked at, one of the main features of this institutionalization had been the promotion of images of clean 'good boys and good girls', and contrasting of these to the rough and rebellious images of the first rock'n'rollers. Similarly, in West Germany, the two major rock stars of the previous period, Peter Kraus and Conny Froboess, had already been projected through images of the 'clean' good boy and good girl respectively, and the relationship between them had been used as a means towards a partial restoration of the traditional gender roles, and a compromise between these norms by engaging in new ways of dancing and dressing. West German institutions, as Poiger reminds us, were still very careful not to challenge acceptable sexual mores,<sup>60</sup> an issue that, as we saw in the previous chapter, was of considerable significance for German society of this period. Bearing in mind that the West German state had already de-regulated and de-demonized rock'n'roll, American popular culture, and teenage entertainment in general, it should not be surprising that there are not many 'calculated' attempts to institutionalize rock'n'roll to be discussed here – apart, of course, from the insistence on the clean image of the popular music stars. The magazine *BRAVO* continued being published throughout this period, involving popular music issues among its topics, whereas the various radio shows that featured rock'n'roll were being broadcast all over West Germany – one needs to remember the decentralized nature of the West German broadcasting network. To a large extent these broadcasts could be received in East Germany as well, despite the obstacles posed by the East German state. According to Ryback, it was not only Radio Luxembourg and the various West German radio stations that broke into East Germany, but Radio in the

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<sup>60</sup> Poiger (i) (2000), p.

American Sector (RIAS) as well.<sup>61</sup> At the same time, according to Wicke, technological advances in East Germany in the 1960s, such as adequate developments in recording technology to allow for the mass production of records, and reduction in the price of phonograph equipment to make purchase and playing of records more accessible, would in turn create the conditions both for the ‘institutionalization’ of rock in Germany, as well as, in due course, for the opposition to this process. Indeed, the availability of technological means that reached very high levels during the 1960s gave young people in East Germany the ability to make decisions on how they might use the mass media according to their own tastes.<sup>62</sup> Furthermore, the East German state, although strictly opposed to the consumption of Western cultural idioms, had also, during this period, acknowledged that over the years rock’n’roll had been embraced by East German youth despite the restrictions. The state therefore now attempted to incorporate rock’n’roll into the agenda of ‘Radio Berlin’, thus joining the efforts towards the institutionalization of the music that were taking place in other European countries, albeit doing it in its own idiosyncratic way. More specifically, as Maas and Reszel point out, DK64, a rock radio show, was then launched in 1964 as part of ‘Radio Berlin’. The show was separated into two parts: the first half featured an LP record by a band from one of the Eastern bloc countries, while in the second part an LP of Western rock music was played.<sup>63</sup> Ryback states that, apart from the aforementioned programme, which ‘imitated the same “hip” style of Western disc jockeys’, another radio show was introduced as an attempt to compete with the radio stations in the West, and this was *Treffs mit Perry*, which dealt not with rock music, but with American folk and protest music and had a wide following among the GDR youth.<sup>64</sup>

In Greece, where technological development had been somewhat slower, ‘calculated’ attempts towards ‘institutionalization’ had become evident by the mid-1960s. As Mpozinis suggests, this coincides with the increase in the number of radios in Greek households, and in particular the spread of transistor radios that had accompanied the

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<sup>61</sup> Ryback, p.87

<sup>62</sup> Wicke (2) (1985), p.322

<sup>63</sup> Maas and Reszel, p.277, n.14: As Maas and Reszel suggest, since Western records were not available in the state, many young people found the opportunity to record the programme, and many of them managed to create musical archives out of the programme’s second part broadcasts.

<sup>64</sup> Ryback, p.87

development of Greek youth music.<sup>65</sup> It was in the face of this development that the first Greek radio shows started being broadcast. This period also sees the appearance of the first Greek music magazine with rock as its main focus, *Monternoi Rythmoi* (first published in 1964).<sup>66</sup> The institutionalization of rock in Greece, having as its main centre Athens in the 1960s, has been known as the time of the ‘golden youth’: the fashion-conscious youth generation was being orientated by journalists and radio DJs towards the consumption of fashionable products. The radio DJ, journalist, and owner of an advertising company, Nikos Mastorakis, who is also attributed with giving the name ‘golden youth’ to this generation, acted as the main figure in the institutionalization of rock’n’roll in Greece. He also labelled them – using the English word – ‘teenagers’, or even ‘brother-o-sister-akia’ (little brothers and sisters). One of his radio shows, as Ntaloukas informs us, was *Leoforion i Melodia* (The Melody Bus), one of the most influential vehicles for institutionalization of the time.<sup>67</sup> Mastorakis, with all his ability to influence the youth of the time, wrote lyrics for the first Greek rock groups, all of them in indifferent English – in fact, as Ntaloukas tells us, he detested Greek lyrics in songs, but also at the same time saw long hair and beards as signs of rebellious youth.<sup>68</sup> In Greece, the ‘institutionalization’ of rock’n’roll happened in the name of commercial profit more than for any other reason.<sup>69</sup> From this perspective it appears to be embodying in more obvious ways everything that the institutionalization represented in other countries as well. More specifically, the process of institutionalization of rock’n’roll in Greece is evidently concentrated in the hands of few people (mainly of Nikos Mastorakis) who were obviously manipulating the commercial potential of the cultural idiom.<sup>70</sup> For example, Mastorakis, owner of an advertising company, radio presenter, and music journalist, was an advocator of a youth culture who he named ‘the golden youth’ which he directed into buying specific products, listen to specific records, and hang out in specific clubs in order for them to be fashionable. In doing so, his personal interest is more than evident. He used all his professional positions in order to promote a culture

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<sup>65</sup> Mpozini, p.194: In the 1950s there was one radio per ten households in Greece.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid, p.203

<sup>67</sup> Ntaloukas, p.158

<sup>68</sup> Ibid, p.159

<sup>69</sup> Ibid, p.158

<sup>70</sup> Portis makes the same point concerning the French music industry of the time and the profit exploitation of the music by few people in the industry; Portis, *French Frenzies*, p.133

that would bring more profits for him. Thus, the institutionalization of rock'n'roll in Greece transformed the indigenous rock culture in one that was commercially-driven, and, thus, converted it in something trivial. However, in spite of all its triviality, it was through this process of institutionalization that rock'n'roll gained its Greek idiosyncratic appearance. Apart from making rock culture more acceptable for Greek society, the process of institutionalization managed to increase the degree of freedom that the Greek youth could enjoy, even as, in the words of Ntaloukas, 'brother-o-sister-akia'.<sup>71</sup>

In Italy, the institutionalization process had already been evident during the previous phase, with the attempts at domestication through the use of rock'n'roll in the cinema, the San Remo appearances of Celentano and Little Tony, as well as with the very early appearance of a chart list. It also needs to be pointed out that the process of 'institutionalization' in Italy was a somewhat confusing process, since it did not only focus on rock'n'roll as such, but extended to all kinds of American songs, all of which it considered to be rock.<sup>72</sup> It was, however, 'institutionalization' by all possible means, and had the effect of drawing the rock idiom into a very Italianized version of it. As Gundle writes, 'Italian rock did not get watered down in the transition from the USA so much as in the processes of co-optation that the [Italian] authorities deployed'. He goes on: 'Lacking any root outside the country's relatively homogenous musical culture and being a voice of modernization, its outsider status was purely conjunctural'.<sup>73</sup> Gundle sees this as the result of the organization of the broadcasting system in Italy, which left no room for independence on the part of rock'n'roll practitioners themselves, and, in the process, it commercialized and, from one perspective, homogenized the rock music of this phase. To quote Gundle again:

[t]he national organization of the mass media, and of the entertainment industry more widely, also meant that the practitioners of rock and roll were never completely separate from the dominant culture. The commercial and industrial "capture" of rock and roll that was also a feature of the American experience followed more obvious lines in Italy.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> Ntaloukas, p.160

<sup>72</sup> Fiori (1984): At the time, there was a disorganized approach on the part of the Italian record industry as far as rock'n'roll is concerned. In fact, it promoted and distributed all American-derived songs, regardless of genre, as 'rock'.

<sup>73</sup> Gundle, p.368

<sup>74</sup> Ibid, p.369



Tarli specifically points out how up to 1964 the official broadcasting system in Italy opposed to the spread of rock'n'roll (and, later, beat) music by resisting and restricting its presence within its media. In this way, as he goes on to add, the country was left almost unaware of the phenomenon in its original form. Indeed, the visibility of the anglo-american music in the official broadcasting systems came after the influence and the huge effect of The Beatles in the country, fact that led to the realization that this was not a phenomenon that could keep being ignored. As a consequence, the second programme of RAI presented their own version of rock-related radio show, *Bandiera Gialla*, which aired first in 1965 and lasted until 1970. The success of *Bandiera Gialla* led to the presentation of a second show, *Per voi Giovanni*, which started in late 1966.<sup>75</sup>

Needless to say, rock'n'roll had now entered the mainstream cultures of Britain, France, West Germany, Greece, and Italy, and furthermore we have witnessed, during this phase, the first (albeit limited) efforts towards the incorporation of rock'n'roll into East German mainstream culture. In all the countries we have looked at, rock'n'roll had been promoted as an idiom that was compatible with the music, the image, and the morals that were considered appropriate for these contexts, while in most cases it was employed (and exploited) in all its manifestations as a cultural idiom for commercial purposes. The obvious exception to this is East Germany, where culture was not ostensibly commercialized, and where institutionalization was almost entirely a political matter. It goes without saying that one of the main characteristics of the institutionalized version of rock'n'roll had been the concealing of the rebellious aspect of rock'n'roll, which was one of the main reasons (along with its commercial potential) that prompted this institutionalization in the first place. This institutionalization process can be seen as hegemony over the degenerate effects that a foreign musical idiom might have on the national popular musics of the countries in question. In some respects, one could argue that the music industries and broadcasting systems of these countries were striving towards definitions of *difference* between their own culture and the original (african-)American character of rock'n'roll. However, this is not to suggest that the audience perceived the process in such a way. As Tomlinson writes,

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<sup>75</sup> Tarli, p.33

This is not to deny that, once established and institutionalized, cultural distinctions *themselves* can have an important role as a resource for individual and collective meaning construction – as in the obvious case of the ‘us-them’ binarism of national identity. But I think it is a mistake to take the very special case of in-group/out-group identification as typical of the whole of cultural practice and experience. People are chronically, constantly engaged in culture, but they are only periodically, or in particular circumstances of cultural oppression, preoccupied with cultural difference.<sup>76</sup>

Thus, one could argue that in the process of happening, ‘institutionalization’ was not perceived by the youth audience as such. As a process it produced a new musical idiom, or series of idioms, based on rock’n’roll but ‘made-to-measure’ for the cultural tastes of each of the countries under consideration. The fact that these idioms did not, eventually, as we are to see later, have a lasting appeal to their target audiences should not be seen as an active reaction to the process itself, but as a genuine dissatisfaction with the musical (and cultural) result. The next section moves beyond the institutionalization process to discuss the resulting musical idioms in each of these countries – a discussion that will help us to understand more clearly the disillusionment of the youth culture with the first version of ‘indigenous’ rock idioms that their national institutions were promoting.

### **‘Join the crazed institution of the stars’: musical manipulation**

In the previous section we saw the processes that these five countries underwent in order to domesticate rock’n’roll within their mainstream cultures. The music itself, the main indicator that this institutionalization took place in an active way as far as music production is concerned, was deliberately left to be discussed separately. As we are to see, the rock’n’roll that is produced by the music industries of these countries during this phase is of a commercial, co-opted, and watered down character, ‘distant’ from the original rock’n’roll style of which the rougher characteristics, and most notably the african-american musical elements, are concealed as far as possible. However, my position is that this musical treatment, regardless of its ‘inauthentic’ approach and the ‘musically unchallenging’ results, managed to give rock’n’roll further visibility and acceptance in each of these countries, and revealed a rock’n’roll style that was acceptable

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<sup>76</sup> Tomlinson (1999), p.69

for their official cultures (indeed, the elements of rock'n'roll retained and the elements of national popular music added and emphasized in its production in each of the countries are important indicators of this). These new indigenous versions of rock'n'roll are also important because they finally disappointed the young audiences who, as we are to see, eventually turned away from these rock'n'roll hybrids in active quests of more 'authentic' idioms. On these grounds, I consider the imitation phase to be very important for the assimilation process I am suggesting here, as it influenced – with both its negative and positive contributions to indigenous rock'n'roll – the rock culture that would soon emerge in each context.

One of the common 'strategies' the record industries in each of these European countries applied was an attempt to align the sound of American rock'n'roll to the indigenous popular music styles. For example, the French record industry, in the process of domesticating rock'n'roll, applied its dominant production methods to emphasize, as Warne puts it, the 'melodic, narrative, and structural aspects of the song', while downplaying 'the rhythmic or discordant elements of rock'n'roll'.<sup>77</sup> With the use of techniques like these, the French recording industry managed to bring the new pop songs closer to features that were more characteristic of the *chanson française*.<sup>78</sup> This kind of rock'n'roll 'domestication' took place not only in terms of musical aspects, but also in terms of the contents of the lyrics as well. A popular idea presented in the lyrics of these kinds of songs is that of the honest romance between young couples. Warne interprets this politically, and maintains that this emphasized honest romantic love 'as forming a well-spring of the republican order'.<sup>79</sup> At the same time, new dance crazes related to rock'n'roll like the twist were promoted in order to attract wider audiences, and to emphasize further the appeal of this music to people of all ages. This, in its turn, as Warne observes, resulted in the use of rock'n'roll music in social events like weddings, or the *bal populaire*, which served to legitimize it further.<sup>80</sup> Looseley writes: '[t]hus eviscerated, rock'n'roll could be safely transmitted to a wider youth constituency as a

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<sup>77</sup> Warne, p.53

<sup>78</sup> Ibid

<sup>79</sup> Ibid

<sup>80</sup> Ibid

consumer style. French pop was born, known as *le yéyé*.<sup>81</sup> *Le yéyé*, named after the English word ‘yeah’ that is so often repeated in rock’n’roll songs, is, as mentioned earlier, the musical style that would be promoted as the music of the culture of *copains*. For this reason, then, it needed to be a musical style of which the sounds would not sound too rough, threatening, and/or rebellious, rock’n’roll characteristics that were often attributed to its african-american origins. According to Drott, the new product of *yéyé* emphasized its distance from the african-american elements of rock’n’roll with an obvious turn towards the *variétés*: as far as instrumentation is concerned, though the electric guitars and drums remained, they were used within an instrumental context that was more polished, and less rough.<sup>82</sup> It is widely acknowledged that the majority of the *yéyé* songs were products manufactured by the record companies, who provided the performers with lyrics and music written by others. Sylvie Vartan’s ‘Si Je Chante’ (1964), France Gall’s ‘Laisse Tomber les Filles’ (1964), Claude François’s ‘Belles! Belles! Belles’ (1962) and Hallyday’s ‘Les Bras en Croix’ (1963) are indicative of this aspect of the *yéyé* style. However, exceptions also existed, like Françoise Hardy, who appears to have written many of her own songs, like ‘Tous les Garçons et les Filles’ (1962); despite the fact that this was a song written by herself, it is at the same time one perfectly aligned with the musical character of the *yéyé* pop sounds.<sup>83</sup>

In West Germany rock’n’roll also went through a process of ‘cleaning up’ what was considered its essentially ‘primitive’ character, and the attempt was made to bring it closer to the *Schlager* song tradition by associating it as much possible with the ‘good boy/good girl’ image (something very evident in the manufactured personas of Kraus and Froboess). Song examples of the period are Peter Kraus’s ‘Sweety’ (1962) and Ted Herold’s ‘Sag’ mir bitte die Wahrheit’ (1964). At the same time, however, the West German rock’n’roll of this period was perceived as largely unsatisfactory by its youth audiences, as Poiger explains:

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<sup>81</sup> Looseley (i), p.27

<sup>82</sup> Eric Drott, *Music and the Elusive Revolution: Cultural Politics and Political Culture in France, 1968-1981* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2011), p.104

<sup>83</sup> Nonetheless, as Portis also suggests Françoise Hardy combined *yéyé* with the romantic ‘idealism’ of the 1960s as this was carried in the work of American songwriters of the time like Joan Baez, Bob Dylan, Peter, Paul and Mary among others; Portis, *French Frenzies*, p.139

The attempts to tame rock'n'roll had limited success. Many young Germans perceived the German rock'n'roll songs as soft imitations and preferred the American originals, which often were versions whose lyrics and rhythms had already been tamed for a white audience. And fashion makers were hardly able or willing to prevent girls from wearing Peter Kraus vests along with James Dean jackets. Finally, even with their tamed German version of rock, Froboess and Kraus introduced American words such as 'baby', 'sexy', and 'love' into the German vocabulary.<sup>84</sup>

Poiger's comment here is important, since it particularly touches upon the issue of language choice in rock song lyrics, something that is of a particular significance for the development of West German rock music, as it is also, indeed, of significance for the other countries in this study (and even in Britain there was a significant shift from singing in an American accent to singing in regional British accents). This will be further discussed later in this chapter. On the other side of the Berlin Wall during this stage we also witness the first efforts of the East German state at the institutionalization of rock'n'roll. Frank Schöbel, who subsequently became one of the most important pop singers in East Germany, released the hully-gully single 'Looky-Looky' in 1964 under the state record company Amiga, as well as the album *Party Twist* the same year. His songs, all in the German language, were obviously watered down, tamed, and heavily influenced by the *Schlager* tradition much more than was the case with the kind of rock'n'roll produced in West Germany during this same period. However, I can find no documentation to indicate that any other rock'n'roll related material was released in East Germany during this phase. Given their limited numbers and their 'harmless' character, these songs could not easily substitute for the East German audience's real fascination with rock'n'roll, and as a consequence East German fans continued to listen to the music from West German radio stations.

In Greece, on the other hand, the 'institutionalization' of rock'n'roll was centred on its commercial potential.<sup>85</sup> This came after the gradual appearance of more Greek bands, who became increasingly musically competent, and gained visibility with the audience, and, eventually, with the industry. Between the years 1963 until 1966 (the

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<sup>84</sup> Poiger (i) (2000), p.193

<sup>85</sup> The first rock'n'roll efforts by Greek bands, on the other hand, appeared, as we saw, later than those in the rest of the countries into consideration in this dissertation. Greek rock bands like TZABADAMASKOYKA, and Ντο Ρε Μι appear in the years 1962-63 and are initially characterized by amateuristic efforts to 'mime' the foreign rock'n'roll.

years of the first stage of imitation) the bands were covering songs of their favourite foreign rock bands. Their own creative attempts were largely confined to these songs and to songs that were direct imitations of them; it is furthermore important to note at this point that the songs they recorded during this phase almost exclusively featured lyrics in the English language.<sup>86</sup> During this period, bands of the previous phase like Tzavadamaskouka and Nto Re Mi changed their names to The Playboys and Forminx respectively, in order to sound more ‘modern’ and ‘contemporary’. In 1964 some of the first attempts were made towards the creation of ‘original’ songs; the music followed faithfully the international character of rock’n’roll, mostly under the guidance of music business representatives, journalists, and music producers. The Forminx, under the management of Mastorakis (who also wrote the lyrics for some of their songs), became particularly influential at this time: their version of ‘Jeronimo Yanka’<sup>87</sup> (1965) and ‘Il Peperone’ (1965) were very popular with the Greek audience.<sup>88</sup> The ‘institutionalized’ Greek rock’n’roll of this period, unlike that in most of the countries under consideration here, did not emphasize Greek musical elements: on the contrary, it was very ‘un-Greek’, placing all its emphasis on replicating not only American and British rock music, but also French and Italian hybrids. However, as I suggested earlier, though this specific approach to rock’n’roll institutionalization provides obstacles to the emergence of a more idiosyncratic version of Greek rock’n’roll, it nevertheless helped the music to become more acceptable within Greece itself. The flip side of the coin was that, through their promotion of the foreign character of rock’n’roll in order to attract wider youth audiences for the institutionalized version of Greek rock’n’roll, accompanied as it was with the use of English lyrics, the entrepreneurs of the time prompted the fashion-conscious Greek youth culture to dismiss their ‘Greek-ness’, which they saw, during the period discussed, as a disadvantage (due to their disillusionment with recent history, as well as with the conservative traditionalism that the official culture had been mostly promoting).

In Italy the situation was different: the Italian rock’n’roll of the period, as well as its practitioners who were called *urlatori*, was censored at the level of studio production:

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<sup>86</sup> Ntaloukas, p.165

<sup>87</sup> ‘Yanka’ was a Finnish folk dance that Forminx became aware of, and, with the help of Mastorakis they adopted it to their repertoire, released it as single with the title ‘Jeronymo Yanka’ which became very successful all around Greece (Mpozinis, p.304)

<sup>88</sup> Ntaloukas, pp.163, 165

as Gundle puts it, it was ‘watered down’ into a more acceptable music genre; as happened in America, there was an effort to ‘marginalize the rougher, more unconventional elements’.<sup>89</sup> According to Minganti, in most cases the grain of the sound, the rhythm, and the cultural potential of the songs were altered; an example of this is the 1962 Italian version of Neil Sedaka’s ‘The King of Clowns’, named ‘Il Re dei Pagliacci’ which was ‘unblackened’ and ‘Italianised’.<sup>90</sup> Overall, according to Minganti, in the Italian version of rock’n’roll the content of the lyrics was gentler, the male performers did not appear as menacing (Giorgio Gaber, Adriano Celentano, Peppino Di Capri), while the females were more provocative and transgressive (Mina, Brunetta, Patty Pravo); the ‘rock stars’ appeared as impersonations of the good boy/good girl image.<sup>91</sup> On the other hand, as Tarli points out, the ‘institutionalization’ of rock’n’roll played on the boundaries of what could be considered as more ‘rebellious’ in the musical expression: more specifically, he mentions how the *urlatori* appeared to be decent, while at the same time they could talk in their songs about relationships in ways that were more real and spontaneous than what Italian popular music knew until then, and also what was presented by the mainstream popular music practitioners of other kinds of popular music in Italy at that same period.<sup>92</sup> Key figures of the 1960s in these terms were Gianni Morandi who, like Presley, had gone for military service, and Rita Pavone, to use Minganti’s descriptive terms, an androgynous, ‘gianburrasca’ (kid menace), virginal in contrast to the image of French and British lolitas.<sup>93</sup> The sound of the institutionalized version of Italian rock’n’roll is evident in Mina’s ‘Stessa Spiaggia Stesso Mare’ (1963) and ‘Renato’ (1962), Celentano’s ‘Peppermint Twist’ (1962) and ‘Serafino Campanaro’ (1963), Gianni Morandi’s ‘Fatti Mandare Dalla Mamma’ (1962), and Rita Pavone’s ‘Viva la Papa Col Pomodoro’ (1965). Fiori argues that the Italian rock songs representative of this period, when not cover versions, were ‘often an involuntary parody, which used the mechanism of disassociation without managing to make it dynamic and plausible’.<sup>94</sup> In this sense, the Italian version of rock’n’roll produced during the institutionalization period, in trying to keep its affinities

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<sup>89</sup> Gundle, pp.377-78

<sup>90</sup> Minganti (1993), p.143

<sup>91</sup> Ibid, p.145

<sup>92</sup> Tarli, p.23

<sup>93</sup> Minganti (1993), p.145

<sup>94</sup> Fiori (1984), p.272

with at least some rock'n'roll elements while at the same time concealing its more subversive character for an Italianized approach that evoked the influence of the light opera singing and the lyricism of the melodrama, produced mostly unconvincing musical results. Minganti summarizes the situation as follows: Italian rock'n'roll covers were 'xeroxed' on white American rock'n'roll which had already been 'cleansed' in the USA, something that would lead to the disappearance of the african-american heritage of rock'n'roll in Italy.<sup>95</sup> However accurate Minganti's estimation of the situation, which can also be applied to varying degrees to the institutionalization process of the music industries of the rest of the countries under consideration here, I suggest that his claim that the music of this period in Italy entirely deprived rock'n'roll of any major characteristics of its african-american originals can be considered as an overstatement. While african-american elements were undoubtedly downplayed, I would argue that the overall sound of these songs still retains clear vestiges of its origins in American rock'n'roll.

Because of the music industry's involvement, the institutionalization of rock music exploded into the creation of a range of 'national' rock'n'roll imitative styles that were little more than commercial attempts to engage and manipulate the indigenous teenage audiences of these five countries. The resulting musical styles were flat, indifferent, conventional, and unsatisfactory: they were pop music by definition. Distant from a mythology of rock making as the indispensable right of the young music heroes, this was a time when the making of rock music was taken up and exploited by record companies and managers who, even though they might not have been youthful themselves, nevertheless were to have an important influence on how rock music developed during this phase. As we shall see, however, the immediate manifestation of all this was actually the disappointment of the youth audiences with the musical results of 'institutionalized rock', something which led to the beginning of more creative 'responses' towards the making of rock music. This was the point when the rock music ideal, with its connotations of rebellion, anti-conformism, and creativity beyond commercial purposes, would start becoming clearly evident. The full realization of this by French, German, Greek, and Italian youth cultures had not yet taken place, but the

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<sup>95</sup> Minganti (1993), p.145



conditions were at least prepared and ready for its recognition – with a little help from the Beatles.

### **Meanwhile in Britain...**

In the meantime, Britain, like the rest of the countries in this study, continued promoting its own tamed version of institutionalized rock right up the beginning of the 1960s. At the same time, however, a live band circuit was growing in the British clubs throughout the country and would produce a different style of British rock, and the two waves would come to exist simultaneously. As well as performing cover versions, the bands on the live band circuit were beginning to write their own material, and many of them already attained wide audience followings before they had released any records. After their potential was recognized with their first record releases, it was only a matter of time before their influence came to be strongly felt. Bradley points out that British rock groups were distinctive in that they were soon in charge of writing their own material (The Shadows, The Merseybeat, The Beatles, Gerry and the Pacemakers, The Dave Clark Five, The Rolling Stones, The Animals), and that this developed concurrently with manufactured stars like Vince Eager, Dickie Pride, Cuddly Dudley and others, who, apart from being commercialized, only had limited ownership of their work.<sup>96</sup> Soon, the work of these bands would start being exported to other countries as well. Indeed, by 1964 Britain, through the Beatles and other bands like the Animals and The Rolling Stones, had started exporting its own version of rock'n'roll back to the USA,<sup>97</sup> and also to the European countries under discussion here, in the process marking the beginning of a new era of rock history. As Hatch and Millward write:

The Beatles' assimilation of rock and roll into their music was crucial in providing for the conditions under which further development could take place. Additionally, their work heralded a new competence among British musicians, a vital factor in the formation of rock. The relationship between American and British music was destined to continue, resulting in further important changes during the mid-1960s.<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> Bradley, p.128

<sup>97</sup> Steve Chapple and Reebee Garofalo, *Rock'n'Roll is Here to Pay: The History and Politics of the Music Industry* (Chicago: Nelson-Hall, 1977), p.249

<sup>98</sup> Hatch and Millward, p.99

From a certain perspective, the first wave of the ‘British Invasion’ clearly demonstrates that the notion of ‘Americanization’ was in many respects already problematic from quite an early stage of post-war cultural history. In fact, Strinati goes so far as to argue that no treatment of the concept of Americanization should exclude the fact that America’s popular culture has at the same time ‘succumbed’ to British influences. Indeed, as Strinati points out, ‘[...] Britain is a media imperialist in its own right, and has had as a consequence some impact upon America and the American market, even if we are talking about an unequal relationship between two media imperialists’.<sup>99</sup> When the Beatles went to the USA in February 1964 they were a huge success: within three months, as Altschuler reminds us, twelve of their singles had been on Billboard Top 100. He writes that ‘The Beatles brought something borrowed as well as something new to the music scene in the United States’.<sup>100</sup> As well as making the same point, Pells takes it further, emphasizing the radical aspects of the Beatles’ music as well as their function as entertainment, and the speed with which the American record business recognized that Britain was now a source of innovation and not just a market opportunity for American music:

The Beatles managed to be avant-garde and commercial at the same time. After their spectacular tour of the United States in 1964, the directors of America’s record companies realized that Britain was not merely a market in which to sell albums but a hotbed of musical innovation. Producers signed any British group they could find to a recording contract. American radio programs featured the latest British music. American singer-composers like Simon and Garfunkel tried to emulate the artistry of the Beatles. Soon, American and British groups sounded indistinguishable. By the 1970s, a transatlantic style had emerged, combining elements of British and American popular music, embodied best in the albums and concert performances of Elton John.<sup>101</sup>

The American rock scene, which had itself turned to the production of innocuous and indifferent rock’n’roll from the late 1950s onwards, now became transformed through the influence of British rock, and a new hybrid emerged which can be seen as anglo-american. I suggest that the fact that the ‘african-’ part of the term ‘african-american’ could now be replaced by the prefix ‘anglo-’ should not at all imply that the ‘black’

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<sup>99</sup> Strinati, p.60

<sup>100</sup> Altschuler, p.181

<sup>101</sup> Pells (1997), p.319

elements of the music had disappeared; instead, the contrary was the case. Indeed, you might say that the ‘african-american’ influence is now so immersed in the music that there is no need to stress it further. African-american elements are, of course, indispensable for rock music. And I suggest that the ‘anglo-’ influence simply redirected the music along a different route, which can be described as the emergence of ‘rock culture’, after the initial explosion of rock’n’roll had subsided. In fact, paradoxically, the music of the British Invasion bands, relied far more heavily on the african-american musical idioms than the commercial American bands of the period, and it was through the British bands that more authentic blues-influenced elements entered the rock scene in the USA as well as in the rest of the European countries being considered here.<sup>102</sup> As Ford puts it: ‘suffice it to say here that the Beatles, and, especially, the Rolling Stones, re-imported black sounds and black lyrics to the United States and for the first time such things gained wide and open appeal in this country [the USA]’.<sup>103</sup> It was the emergence of anglo-american music, and its transmission to the rest of the European countries being considered here that marked the beginning of what I have called the second stage of the ‘imitation’ period. I argue that the active engagement with the music and the ‘beat craze’ that would soon begin developing in each country should not be seen as a new wave of reception of a different music but rather as the same music but now further developed, so that in each country artists, music industries, and audience, had already had enough exposure to the sounds of the earlier rock’n’roll to be in a position now to begin developing their own – albeit imitative – versions of the new British rock music.

## **2. Second stage of imitation: imitation through active music-making**

### **‘Everybody wants to be like you, show me what to do’: British Invasion and European beat-boom movements**

In Britain the beat-band movement represented by the Beatles, The Rolling Stones, The Animals, The Kinks, and many other bands kept growing. Songs like The Kinks’ ‘You Really Got Me’ (1964), The Beatles’ ‘A Hard Day’s Night’ (1964), The Rolling Stones’ ‘(I Can’t Get No) Satisfaction’ (1965), The Who’s ‘My Generation’ (1965), seemed to

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<sup>102</sup> The arrival of the beat music in the USA initially caused an outrage in the USA.

<sup>103</sup> Ford, p.463

represent the soundtrack of the young audiences of the time in a way that contrasted strongly with the 'institutionalized' version of British rock'n'roll, mainly because these bands were writing and playing their own material and making songs that seemed more relevant to the lifestyle of the fans. The subcultures of the beats and the mods came to dominate the British popular music scene of the time, being particularly visible during the first half of the 1960s. As we saw, the situation was by and large different in the rest of the countries we are looking at here. Indeed, despite the undeniable fact that the 'clean' version of rock'n'roll promoted in France, West and East Germany, Greece, and Italy had attracted a standard audience and was still successful as a popular music idiom, it nevertheless remained a popular music style that obviously downplayed many of the important ideological features previously applied to rock'n'roll. Significant among these was the idea that rock'n'roll carries revolutionary and subversive elements. Thus it should not come as a surprise that, although the majority of the 'indigenous' youth audiences still danced to the 'manufactured' rock'n'roll versions of their national record industries, they were at the same time in pursuit of a new musical idiom through which they would be able to express their distance from their official cultures. The original rock of British bands, as well as the international status Bob Dylan had gained during the first half of the 1960s, initially as a protest singer-songwriter, and, at the particular moment we are referring to here, as a serious 'protest' rock singer-songwriter, became significant points of reference for these kinds of musical quests that were by now also identifiable within French, German, Greek, and Italian youth audiences. The British bands and Bob Dylan affected the rock scene dramatically, both by bringing rock music closer to a wider youth audience (shifting away from an identification with teenagers to include students and young workers as well), and also by incorporating into rock music elements of social awareness and political criticism. In doing so, they managed in the process to re-direct sectors of the youth culture who were dissatisfied with the commercialized versions of rock'n'roll back to what now became known as 'rock music', and which now appeared to be rebellious once again. In France, for example, while *le yéyé* culture was still acceptable to the less demanding parts of the teenage audience in the mid-1960s, its obvious mediocrity turned other parts of the youth audience (more particularly middle-class youth culture and university students) towards a search for more authentic popular

music styles. The new British, as well as American youth icons (most significantly The Beatles and Bob Dylan) became their point of reference. As Drott writes, 'French subcultures drew on the variety of Anglo-American popular music to forge distinctive musical identities. British invasion bands and garage rock, for instance, became countermodels that French groups like Les Gypsys and Les Bowlers mined in the hope of creating a sound that would set them apart from the *yéyé* mainstream'.<sup>104</sup> This was aligned with the emergence of a 'protest movement' or 'beatnik music' in France. However, the French imitations of the new trends from the US and the UK were once more seen as inauthentic, and were considered, in Looseley's words, as 'apings' of the 'trappings of anglophone youth culture, only half-understood'.<sup>105</sup> Indeed, despite the fact that French bands, inspired by the work of the British bands, became musically active and started *playing* music themselves, there was still a lack of a more original French approach to rock music: the work of these bands had still remained by and large imitative. However, the fact alone that an active rock scene began to appear in France as well itself serves to mark the importance of this stage of imitation, and it constitutes the first step towards a more active French engagement with the rock idiom.

The British Invasion reached Italy in 1964 and was followed by the rise of Italian beat, a craze distinct from that of the *urlatori*.<sup>106</sup> By being less focused on the idea of mere entertainment and more orientated towards the elements of a rising hippy movement, counterculture, and psychedelia, as Agostini suggests, the Italian beat movement came to be the vehicle that led to the 'formation of a wider identity for Italian rock'.<sup>107</sup> Parentin, who sees Italian beat as the Italian version of 'the Mersey beat' genre, points out that 'Italian beat' included in its canon mostly covers of songs that were hits in other countries and became very popular in the second half of 1960s.<sup>108</sup> Nonetheless, as Prato argues, although the beat sound had been really successful and widespread in the mid-1960s, the Italian audience was usually not aware that this was an imported musical style, partly because these songs were sung in the Italian language. Thus, 'an entire

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<sup>104</sup> Drott, p.105

<sup>105</sup> Looseley (i), p.29

<sup>106</sup> Tarli, p.7: Beat in Italy lasted between 1964-1969

<sup>107</sup> Agostini (2007), p.393

<sup>108</sup> Parentin, loc.50-56

generation [...] grew up believing that “Che colpa abbiamo noi”, “Sognando California” or “Ragazzo Triste” [...] were great Italian songs’.<sup>109</sup> Prato, who names this period the ‘Big Cheat’ because it is characterized by covers, states that we should not view Italian rock of this particular period too negatively, since, as he maintains, it was exactly this tendency towards covers that ‘paved the way to the modern Italian song’.<sup>110</sup> From one perspective, this can be seen in relation to the music’s reception. According to Maran, ‘the receiver is independent enough to interpret mimetic performance according to his/her own previous knowledge, convictions and aesthetic preferences, and thus mimetic representation, like every other communicative act, may acquire a different meaning to the receiver than the creative subject had intended’.<sup>111</sup> Indeed, since the Italian audience was not aware of the actual origin of the songs, and considered them to be original Italian creations, it is reasonable to assume that they received them as such. It is important to add here that, according to Parentin, bearing in mind that Italy was considered to be a ‘secondary market’ and therefore that the original versions of the British songs were unlikely to be heard in the country, the explosion of the cover phenomenon during this period was not something unexpected.<sup>112</sup> Indeed, during this time, Italian radio only played the latest novelties, and it was only when young people of that period were able to travel to London that they could bring back albums of groups like Deep Purple, and Led Zeppelin.<sup>113</sup> On the other hand, Filippa argues that the Italian audience of the 1960s was more interested in British and American rock than in the kind of music that was created by the Italian record industry.<sup>114</sup>

Musically, Italian beat, as Parentin describes it, included ‘simple, carefree songs, with clear harmony vocals on “beating” rhythms to dance to, songs in their way revolutionary, inspired by the Beatles, Rolling Stones, Yardbirds, Animals, and Hollies’.<sup>115</sup> He goes on to state: ‘To take inspiration here means producing cover

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<sup>109</sup> Prato (2007), p.442; covers of ‘Cheryl’s Going Home’ (Bob Lind and the Blues Project), ‘California Dreamin’ (Mamas and Papas) and ‘But you’re Mine’ (Sonny and Cher) respectively

<sup>110</sup> Prato (2007), p.460

<sup>111</sup> Maran, p.206

<sup>112</sup> Parentin, loc.66

<sup>113</sup> Luciano Regoli as cited in Parentin, loc.82

<sup>114</sup> Marcella Filippa, ‘Popular song and musical cultures’ in *Italian Cultural Studies: An Introduction*, David Firgacs and Robert Lumley (eds.), (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), p.340

<sup>115</sup> Parentin, loc.56

versions, transposing foreign songs to make new pieces'.<sup>116</sup> The first Italian beat band were, according to Tarli, Fausto Leali I suoi Novelty who in 1963 released their version of the Beatles' 'Please, Please Me'.<sup>117</sup> As Prato points out, almost all the Italian bands of the 1960s like Equipe 84, Rokes, I Dik Dik, New Trolls, Camaleonti began their musical careers by playing cover versions of American, British, and French songs.<sup>118</sup> However, the tight control that Fiori suggests these bands and others like Nomadi and Corvi were subjected to by the record companies affected the Italian rock music at an important stage in its development, especially in ideological terms. He claims that, while these bands would at times incorporate political and even radical messages in their songs, they were 'continually forced to compromise'.<sup>119</sup> Up to the early 1970s, so Parentin suggests, the Italian music business had been conservative and not very open to the new tendencies in popular music, and for this reason it had been mostly unsupportive of styles such as rock'n'roll in the 1950s and rock-blues in the 1960s.<sup>120</sup> Before the 1970s, as Fiori points out, the Italian record companies would not support rock groups that were producing their own material, feeling more secure having them perform cover songs that had already been successful abroad, or giving them the songs themselves. He writes: 'Despite its large-scale effects on clothing and general taste, even English and American rock remained a minority taste in the Italian record market,' something he attributes to the reluctance of the record companies to promote a musical style of foreign descent to a small market like the Italian.<sup>121</sup> What should be kept in mind in the consideration of Italian beat (the second stage of 'imitation' in Italy) is that, while the bands themselves appear to have begun by this point to create their own work, the Italian music industry would not release it. When seen in this context I suggest that what we have is a combination of, on the one hand, the attitude of the music industry in its determination to institutionalize foreign rock'n'roll idioms (the first stage of 'imitation') applied, on the other hand, to the latest new beat sounds (the second stage of 'imitation') as well. Nevertheless, outside the boundaries of the Italian music industry, amateur beat bands

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<sup>116</sup> Ibid

<sup>117</sup> Tarli, p.29

<sup>118</sup> Prato, 'Italy' (i) (2005), p.225

<sup>119</sup> Fiori (1984), p.270

<sup>120</sup> Parentin, loc.1131

<sup>121</sup> Fiori (1984), p.270

were constantly spreading. Tarli supports this argument, and states that because of the influence of artists like Dylan, Baez, and the Beatles, the Italian youth culture went on to search for their own ways of communication.<sup>122</sup> As Agostini puts it: ‘In contrast to the yellers and the young people gyrating to the twist and shake, the anticonformism and the transgression exhibited by the beat generation had less to do with an ostentatious yearning for fun and escapism than a criticism of established values and lifestyles. The buzzword would soon be “protest”’.<sup>123</sup> Indeed, as we are to see in the next chapter, ‘protest’ will be the buzzword for the youth culture and rock music in each of the countries under consideration.

Greece, which continued to follow the international rock developments with a small time lag, had a less active culture of music making outside the confines of the music industry than the rest of the countries we are discussing here during this period. As we saw in the section on ‘institutionalization’, Greek rock bands were imitative and mainly co-opted by the industry, and this remained largely the case after the British Invasion as well. Nonetheless, the number of rock bands during the second stage of imitation increased dramatically, and in addition to the successful ones that dominated during the institutionalization stage, other bands like Idols, Charms, Stormies, Seagulls, and Girls appear as well. Despite their increase in number, these rock bands were not yet particularly innovative. Indeed, the Greek rock music that was produced during this stage is found by Mpozinis to closely resemble the kind of rock’n’roll that characterized the period 1954-59 in the USA: simple and powerful, mostly danceable songs with spontaneous and basic elements of social criticism. He goes on to suggest, however, that the Greek rock songs of this phase pale into insignificance when compared with the American and British rock output of the time. This shows, so he argues, that in Greece at this period there existed a type of ‘proto-rock’ which was the product, on the one hand, of the music industry and broadcasting systems, and all the other agents of institutionalization. On the other hand, however, he suggests that the unsatisfactory development of Greek rock music was also the result of the limited exposure to wider international developments in rock music provided by Greek music journalists and radio

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<sup>122</sup> Tarli, p.13

<sup>123</sup> Agostini (2007), p.393



DJs during this period, as well as the limited knowledge of the English language on the part of the Greek youth culture.<sup>124</sup> It is evident that it is difficult to distinguish between the two stages of imitation in Greece, since the bands (even after the British influence) did not seem to make a significant contribution beyond the commercial networks that had so rigidly institutionalized rock in the country, or if they did we do not have enough information on the ways this might have happened in order to make any convincing case for the appearance of anything like a counter-culture in Greek rock music at this point. However, towards the end of the period, as will be further discussed below, a change in the rock scene would initiate a significant shift in the rock mentality of the time. More specifically, after the influence of the Greek band Olympians in 1966, the Greek rock scene largely abandoned the exclusive use of English lyrics and turned to the Greek language. This shift provided Greek bands with greater authority and confidence regarding the ways in which they handled their own material, as well as their ability to communicate with an audience which was not yet sufficiently knowledgeable of the English language.

In an entirely different context, in East Germany, the effect of the totalitarian regime on rock music appeared to be increasing dramatically during this stage of imitation, something to be seen not only in terms of the creation and production of the music, but also in terms of its consumption. After the British Invasion East Germany entered a phase of fascination with the anglo-american style of music, expressed through what Ryback calls 'Beatle-mania'. As Ryback shows, wherever instruments were available (in East Germany, as was the case in other Soviet bloc countries, there was still a lack of guitars, keyboards, and sound systems), there was also an obvious engagement with rock activities.<sup>125</sup> Moreover, many musicians who represented other musical styles and who were coming from different musical backgrounds converted to rock music after the influence of the Beatles: they formed numerous bands that became notably popular and their work was based on covering songs from the Beatles.<sup>126</sup> Wicke suggests that the spontaneous and broad adaptation of the anglo-american form of rock on the part of the numerous young amateur East German bands came in parallel with the kind of media-

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<sup>124</sup> Mpozinis, p.320

<sup>125</sup> Ryback, pp.60-61

<sup>126</sup> Ibid

related advances that were taking place in the country during the period of discussion. These advances concerned not only technological developments, but also the social patterns surrounding media usage in the country that were now becoming more liberal – something, however, that would not last.<sup>127</sup> One manifestation of these media changes, as shown by Maas and Reszel, was the fact that the East German record company Amiga had released Beatles records half way through 1965.<sup>128</sup> Indeed, the state had initially not been opposed to the beat-craze of the mid-1960s and this is one of the reasons, as Maas and Reszel go on to suggest, for the great number of young popular musicians who got involved with beat<sup>129</sup> music in the GDR of the time.<sup>130</sup> However, this tolerance did not last long: after the destruction of the Waldbühne that followed a concert of the Rolling Stones in West Berlin, Western rock music was again seen as a bad influence and as something that should be expelled from East Germany.<sup>131</sup> Goodboy, Tate and Wallace make note of a media campaign against beat, which started taking place in the summer of 1965.<sup>132</sup> As a result, beat music (as the authorities still called it) was banned from the GDR in December 1965, a decision that was officially taken during the eleventh meeting of the ‘Central Committee’.<sup>133</sup>

The banning of beat music in the GDR did not by any means restrict the activities of the East German rock youth culture. On the contrary, as Wicke and Shepherd note, in a way that resembled the existence of various ‘answers to Elvis’ that we saw taking place during the ‘reception period’, numerous beat bands now sprang up all over East Germany, beyond the ‘reach’ of the East German authorities. The moment any of these beat groups became visible, the authorities immediately went on to ‘forbid its activities because they were not in accordance with GDR laws’.<sup>134</sup> In this context, groups such as the Butlers (from Leipzig) were banned and disbanded, whereas other groups were forced to adjust their repertoire, their fashion style, and their behaviour to the requirements of

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<sup>127</sup> Wicke (2) (1985), ‘Young people and popular music in East Germany: focus on a scene’, p.321

<sup>128</sup> Maas and Reszel, p.276, n.2

<sup>129</sup> According to Goodboy, Tate, and Wallace, pp.174-5, the term beat was used by the East German officials to describe a variety of styles, like the music of British groups, rock’n’roll, blues, and other styles of Western pop musics

<sup>130</sup> Maas and Reszel, p.268

<sup>131</sup> Ibid

<sup>132</sup> Goodboy, Tate and Wallace, p.175

<sup>133</sup> Maas and Reszel, p.268

<sup>134</sup> Wicke and Shepherd, p.26

the state in order to be allowed to perform.<sup>135</sup> Nonetheless, the most important observation to be made at this point is that the issue of so-called ‘beat music’ occupied a central position during the discussions of such an important body as that of the Central Committee in its meetings of that year. This fact alone highlights how it was the East German state itself that gave rock music such a significant political importance within its borders. Street’s words are very relevant in this context, when he writes that:

Although it is possible to chart acts of censorship, the state’s actions are not themselves necessarily a response to the power of music. Just because the state or its agents censor x or y does not mean that x or y had the ability to shock or disturb or inspire. State intervention may politicize the apolitical or irrelevant, so that what we are observing is the operation of the state, its prejudices, and paranoia, and not the intrinsic potency of music [...] It cannot be assumed that the state’s reaction to popular music is a direct and necessary result of the threats and dangers represented by the sound. Stalin’s fear of the saxophone, or the BBC’s of the Sex Pistols, tell us little about the effects of either, and rather more about the ideology and interests of Stalin and the BBC.<sup>136</sup>

This kind of relationship between music and politics is evident at various points and to varying degrees in all the countries we are concerned with in this dissertation, but it is manifested in the most obvious and straightforward way in the context of East Germany. All in all, the extensive politicization of East German rock that resulted from the actions of the state was both the cause and also the effect of the way East German rock developed from the moment of its reception and until its final assimilation in the country. The fact that, as is to be seen in more detail in the next two chapters, East German rock had a development that differed in obvious ways from that of British, French, West German, Greek, and Italian rock is a major indicator of this.

During the period we are looking at here – the second stage of imitation – the East German state had once more applied heavy censorship to rock music, restricting the creativity of rock bands to a significant degree, and going as far as disbanding the ones that did not comply with the requirements of the state. One example of this is the ban of the group Butlers in Autumn 1965, because their music and behaviour were considered inappropriate and incompatible with the beliefs of the state. Ryback points out that the ban on the Butlers was what sparked the first public confrontations between rock fans and

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<sup>135</sup> Goodboy, Tate and Wallace, p.175

<sup>136</sup> Street (2003), p.119

the state that took place not only in East Germany, but in the Soviet bloc in general. During these riots of the East German rock fans, the police intervened violently, ‘beating and arresting over one hundred youngsters’.<sup>137</sup> In addition to these events, another decision taken during the eleventh meeting of the Central Committee would be the cause of a further uprising within East German musical culture as a whole: this was the revocation of the performing license of the songwriter Wolf Biermann, because his music was considered by the state to be destructive and inappropriate.<sup>138</sup> However, Biermann continued to perform for friends, fans, and to record songs for West German record companies from his apartment for the next ten years.<sup>139</sup> Although at first sight this fact does not seem to be directly relevant to rock music as such, it did nevertheless have an important impact on the development of East German rock during the next phase, something that will be further discussed in the next chapter.

As was to be expected, rock culture survived in East Germany during this period despite the strict regulations applied by the state. According to Ryback, rock fans of the time stayed in contact with the international development of rock music by managing to buy expensive Western records that were being circulated on the black market, and also by being able to tune into West German radio stations, as well as Radio Luxembourg and RIAS, despite the fact that FDJ members were engaged in missions of cutting radio and television antennas that were facing towards the West.<sup>140</sup> At the same time, East German bands were experiencing even more intense pressure from the state.<sup>141</sup> As Larkey points out, bands had to be granted a special performance license in order to be allowed to play for audiences. He describes the process as follows:

First they had to submit their lyrics to an ‘editorial board’ (*Lektorat*) comprised of members of the cultural commission of their city or county district. Only after approval of the lyrics, the band’s physical appearance, and its music was it possible for the band to audition. Band members were also obliged to prove that they were involved in music instruction at an approved music school, in which not only music but also Marxism-Leninism were taught and a modicum of political control was exercised.<sup>142</sup>

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<sup>137</sup> Ryback, p.61

<sup>138</sup> Ibid, p.90

<sup>139</sup> Ibid

<sup>140</sup> Ibid, p.91

<sup>141</sup> Ibid

<sup>142</sup> Larkey (2002), p.246

Needless to say, the East German rock music of the time was strictly controlled and had to comply with the ideologies of the state in order for it to be able to exist at all. However, the music could still be interpreted by its listeners in different ways, and fans sometimes read political messages in the songs that may or may not have been intentionally inserted by the songwriters and performers. This point is also supported by Negus, who argues that, as a result of the regime against rock, ‘the performance and transmission of specific musical sounds became a non-linguistic, nonrepresentational way of communicating opposition to the system’,<sup>143</sup> something I shall consider in more detail in the next chapter. The space dedicated to the discussion of East German rock during the years after the British rock invasion was proportionately larger than the other countries we have looked at, mainly because the dialectic between rock music and the state that took place during the second stage of imitation was very important for the future of East German rock. As Goodboy, Tate, and Wallace argue, ‘[t]he Party’s efforts to encourage rock groups to stop copying Western bands and write their own songs were to lead to the GDR becoming the birthplace of *Deutschrock* in the 1960s’.<sup>144</sup> Moreover, as Shingler suggests, the fact that the state did not allow performances from Western bands in the GDR could be seen as a positive factor for the East German groups in that they did not face competition from foreign musicians.<sup>145</sup> The flip side of the coin is presented by Leitner when he argues that because of the unavailability of Western rock bands in the GDR, the East German bands ‘therefore felt the need to present the styles of specific Western bands to the GDR rock public’.<sup>146</sup>

On the other side of the Wall, things were developing in the exact opposite way. The liberal stance of the West German state towards the American and, subsequently, British influences has already been pointed out, and was not to change during the second stage of imitation either. As Larkey informs us, ‘the introduction of the rock genre and the influence of popular British bands like The Beatles and the Rolling Stones entailed an

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<sup>143</sup> Negus (2), pp.189-190

<sup>144</sup> Goodboy, Tate, and Wallace, p.175

<sup>145</sup> James Shingler, ‘Rocking the wall: East German rock and pop in the 1970s and 1980s’ in *The View East: Central and Eastern Europe, Past and Present*, <http://thevieweast.wordpress.com/2011/07/15/rocking-the-wall-east-german-rock-and-pop-in-the-1970s-and-1980s/> (accessed: 12/09/2013)

<sup>146</sup> Leitner, p.18

imitative phase for German rock bands, which included the use of English lyrics based on these British, as well as American, models'.<sup>147</sup> I have already touched upon the importance of the language in which the lyrics were sung at several points above, and it is in fact something that is to be regarded as of crucial significance during the second stage of imitation, although its manifestation is of more importance in some of the countries we are looking at here than in others. This is the case with West Germany, where it is partly the issue of the language that indicates the 'stagnation' of the development of rock music during this period. We shall now turn to discuss the issue of rock music and language for this period in more detail.

### **Language selection and rock**

The tension between the use of the English and German languages in West German rock had existed right from the early years of the 'reception period'. According to Larkey, "“rock” signified the rebellious, insurrectional aspect of avant-garde or heterodox aspect of popular music', in opposition to the *Schlager* which lacked any element of social criticism.<sup>148</sup> Despite the fact that English 'fragments' were inserted in some songs during the reception phase and the stage of 'institutionalization' by various German lyric writers who intended to 'poke fun at its usage', Larkey points out that the use of English lyrics increasingly became a sign of artistic prowess and intent, demonstrating global competitiveness and legitimacy, particularly in the rock genre, where its use dominated.<sup>149</sup> Larkey, when commenting on the use of English words, lyrics, and even stage names employed by West German practitioners writes that: '[c]ultural conservatives in both the East and West considered the use of English and the decline of [the] German language evident in the American-derived rock and pop music to be a further example of the cultural demise engendered by the American-dominated recording industry'.<sup>150</sup> From one perspective this might be considered as valid. It might also be a valid consideration that the West German youth culture, being freer in their use of rock music, explored other possibilities during their imitative phase of rock, especially after

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<sup>147</sup> Larkey (2000), p.5

<sup>148</sup> Ibid, p.4

<sup>149</sup> Ibid

<sup>150</sup> Larkey (2002), p.239

the influence of the British Invasion bands which led to the formation of many amateur and professional rock groups at the time.

The most obvious contrast to the use of English lyrics in West German rock during this imitative phase is the rock situation in France. As we saw, from the very first instances of rock production during the early reception phase, French rock was exclusively using lyrics in the French language. Nevertheless, as Looseley points out, there had been an obvious reluctance to accept rock as compatible with French culture in general, and it had been particularly argued that rock as a musical idiom could not be adequately combined with the French language.<sup>151</sup> And, indeed, as we are to see in the next chapter, it would take French rock music more time to prove that, although unsuitable at first, the French language could be combined with the african-american musical elements that characterize the rock sound in ways that could be valid and creative. The Italian record industry, on the other hand, in its initial engagement with rock during the reception phase turned to the release of rock covers just as they were in the original – that is, in the English language. It was only after the realization that the Italian audience was more interested in buying Italian rock productions that were sung in their indigenous language that they turned to releasing songs in Italian, even if these songs were to remain covers of foreign songs. The use of the Italian language has remained the norm ever since.

In Greece, on the other hand, the situation was somewhat more complicated during this stage of imitation. As we saw, the entrepreneurs of the time promoted songs with English lyrics during the phase of institutionalization, considering these more modern and fashionable – supposedly aligned with rock developments abroad. However, it was the introduction of song lyrics in the Greek language that marked the beginning of a particularly idiosyncratic Greek rock idiom, taking place roughly a decade after the reception of rock'n'roll in the country. This shift happened literally within a single night in October 1966, when a big concert/competition of 'modern Greek bands' took place. The winner of the competition would emerge from the audience's votes. All the bands, in line with the tendency of the record industry of the time, presented songs with English

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<sup>151</sup> Looseley (2), p.70: Drawing on Simon Frith, Looseley goes on to add that there are indeed some languages that are possibly not suited for rock music accompaniment.

lyrics, apart from one band from Thessaloniki (considered to be the outsider in the competition), the Olympians, who presented their song 'O Tropos' ('The Way') in Greek. Their song won the competition overwhelmingly. This single event marked the beginning of a period when rock songs started to be written in Greek, something that showed that the musicians had started incorporating Greek elements in their songs, bringing the foreign rock idiom closer to a very characteristic feature of their nationality: the Greek language. However, this tendency was again co-opted and neutralized by the Greek music industry, and rock songs that made use of Greek lyrics were soon turned into innocuous commercial pop songs. Therefore, when Greek rock musicians, influenced by the work of Bob Dylan, Jimi Hendrix, Cream and others, started to incorporate more serious issues in their songs, making political references and expressing concern for social issues, they considered Greek lyrics as inadequate to support this kind of approach and abandoned the language altogether (due to the fact that successful rock songs of the time that were in Greek came to be considered as commercial by definition, and, thus, as representative of the very system the 'serious' Greek rock musicians were opposing). The re-abandonment of Greek lyrics and the new disassociation of the Greek language from rock music was not helpful for the further development of a rock culture in Greece, since most Greeks still did not have a sufficient knowledge of the English language.

Language is an important unifying element within a nation, and I suggest that the first step towards the appropriation of any imported musical style should be traced from the moment when a specific musical idiom is used in combination with the indigenous language of the 'host' country. This does not mean that the first step towards appropriation is not still an imitative style. It could be argued, however, that it is essential for the process of assimilation to have imitated a style in order for one to begin incorporating her own identity into its usage. And language plays an important role in these terms, since it is the primary medium that connects the people of a nation, albeit not necessarily in nationalistic ways. As Anderson writes,

It is always a mistake to treat languages in the way that certain nationalist ideologues treat them – as *emblems* of nation-ness, like flags, costumes, folk-dances, and the rest. Much the most important thing about language is its



capacity for generating imagined communities, building in effect *particular solidarities*.<sup>152</sup>

Indeed, this is a complicated issue to attempt to address here, due to the fact that there are plenty of cases where several nations share the same language as well as nations that are multi-lingual. It would not be beneficial for this dissertation to expand on the complexities of this issue here, but it is indeed something that it should be remembered at all times when the association of a specific nation with a specific language is being considered. Another complexity which is particularly relevant for our purposes here is revealed in the cases when language selection in lyrics is not straightforward, mainly in instances when languages have acquired ideological implications. This was particularly exemplified in the examples of West Germany and, most importantly, Greece during this period. A similar point can be made for East Germany, where rock musicians had no other option but to use the German language in the production of rock music. This can be seen to work in contradictory ways, not least in giving the use of English lyrics a revolutionary character in certain instances.

### **In conclusion**

This phase of imitation ends in different ways for each country, but with many similarities between them as well. As we have seen in this chapter, the music industries and broadcasting systems in Britain, France, Germany, Greece, and Italy, were now fully grown, technologically equipped and organized, and thus the infrastructure for the institutionalization of rock'n'roll was now firmly in place. As has been extensively discussed, the process of institutionalization did not take place only in musical terms: in each of the countries we have looked at, media and cultural entrepreneurs promoted a rock'n'roll-inspired culture that was tamed and aligned with the 'moral' standards of each of these states. Rebellious and sensual elements that were the causes of moral panics among the adult generation during the previous phase had now been toned down and eliminated. In similar vein, the 'institutionalization' of the music itself manifested itself in each context in the efforts to tame the rougher elements of the music, minimize its african-american character, and blend rock'n'roll with elements that were more

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<sup>152</sup> Anderson (1991), p.154

characteristic of the popular musics of the countries in question: *chanson* elements in France, melodramatic lyricism in Italy, *Schlager* in the two Germanys, and music hall in Britain. Greece did not follow this line, since, in their efforts to take advantage of the fascination of the Greek audiences with the foreign fashion, the Greek rock ‘institutionalizers’ kept their version of rock as a tamed semblance of foreign music, largely by concealing specifically Greek elements (the language included) altogether. In any case, the institutionalization and continuous commercialization of rock’n’roll, facilitated both by its incorporation into the mainstream music industry and, consequently, by its seeming cultural legitimization, led to the creation of indigenous rock idioms that in most contexts proved eventually to be unsatisfactory for the young audiences of these five countries under consideration. I suggest that the reason for this could be traced to the fact that these rock versions had been products of the music industry and of show business instead of resulting directly from developments in rock’n’roll from the French, German, Greek, and Italian youth cultures themselves, and which, as such, could not last long and could not be seen as idioms that could be taken further to become eventually ‘authentic’. Nonetheless, this is not to deny that the institutionalized rock’n’roll promoted by the indigenous music industries did reach wide youth audiences, who, in their turn, enjoyed and danced to this music. On the contrary, the majority of audiences were embracing these rock’n’roll versions – but in the same way they embraced rock’n’roll in its original reception: as consumers of a musical fad.

When the British bands made their appearance in these countries a new wave of influence was sparked, which in its turn resulted in a new stage of imitation, but now this imitation was of a more active character: it was one that came from the realization that ordinary young people could create their own music and communicate it, instead of simply consuming what was offered to them. As we have seen in this chapter, none of these countries – that is to say, France, Germany, Greece and Italy – was yet to exhibit any band that would create in its own country an equivalent of the Beatles, the Rolling Stones, or any other British band of the time. I would interpret this in the following terms: all these five countries, during both of the stages of this imitation phase, came closer to a more idiosyncratic and indigenous version of rock, but were still far from a more substantial assimilation of the rock idiom. The reason for this I see as three-fold:

initially, the rigid, calculated institutionalization of rock'n'roll by the music industries and broadcasting systems of these countries left no room for new, indigenous rock ideas that had grown from beyond the sphere of the music industries themselves. Second, none of these countries apart from Britain had up to this point a live band circuit that could create a national music phenomenon equivalent to the one that produced the bands of the British Invasion which became as notorious as to be impossible for the British music industry to ignore. Thirdly, the availability of musical instruments and rehearsal spaces was probably more limited for the majority of young people in these countries than was the case in Britain – let alone the fact that there had not been a previous engagement in any of these countries with creative music activities that could compare with the situation in Britain that had led to the emergence of the *skiffle* culture. In addition to the above, the French, German, Greek, and Italian cultures were all distinctive in character, and did not share many common traits with American culture, unlike Britain which historically had shared many cultural traits with the USA, most important among them being, of course, the English language.

For all these reasons, I consider the 'imitation period' discussed in this chapter to live up to its name, since it gave us only imitative versions of rock. Nonetheless, these imitative versions are extremely significant for the developments that will take place in the next two phases. Indeed, from the institutionalized version of rock'n'roll that comprised the first stage of imitation we inherited the knowledge of what were the acceptable versions of rock in the countries under consideration here: what national popular music characteristics were added, what was emphasized and what was silenced. At the same time, the explosive effect of British beat music during the second stage of imitation, followed as it was by the turn of more and more French, German, Greek, and Italian bands towards active music making, increasingly gave rise to a new, more confident, and more creative approach. The musical result might have been one of close imitation of the British bands; nevertheless, the fact that large parts of the youth cultures of these countries had now been inspired by the song-writing British bands brought new realizations of possibilities and contributed enormously to the developing rock consciousness of the time.

In the meantime, the influence of the British bands was also accompanied by the international importance of Bob Dylan and his achievement in bringing the element of protest into the culture of rock music, turning in the process the focus of rock towards more serious social and political ideas. Dylan, who had himself been in constant creative dialogue with the Beatles, was also influential for musicians and audiences all over Europe. At the same time, additional developments within the American and the British rock scenes that took place during this period should also be mentioned at this point, since the visibility and influence of these contributed in significant ways to the development of rock music in Britain, France, Germany, Greece, and Italy that will be discussed in the next chapter. More specifically, I am referring to the San Francisco movement of ‘acid rock’ (alternatively called ‘psychedelic’), which was visible from around 1966, and is represented by bands like Jefferson Airplane, Big Brother and the Holding Company, and the Grateful Dead. Watts describes ‘acid rock’ as ‘the aural evocation of effects produced on the human senses by the drug LSD, lysergic acid diethylamide (effects known as “psychedelic”)’.<sup>153</sup> He goes on to add that ‘the *notion* of a drug culture posited by acid has simply served as a common frame of reference for musicians and audiences everywhere’.<sup>154</sup> On the other side of the Atlantic, The Beatles were now turning away from live pop music to begin their exploration of the possibilities of the creative use of the recording studio. It was in this context that, as Thompson puts it, ‘the sixties saw the beginning of the eclipse of corporate artists and repertoire managers by independent producers, an increase in the number of studios, and the introduction of multitrack recorders’.<sup>155</sup> Changing their sound in the 1965 album *Rubber Soul*, they went on – not far removed from the psychedelic explorations of the San Francisco sound – to release *Revolver* in August 1966, with which they initiated a new era of musical explorations that proved particularly significant for the ‘development period’ discussed in the next chapter. I am not suggesting here that The Beatles had been the only major innovators of these new musical explorations, since similar

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<sup>153</sup> Michael Watts, ‘The call and response of popular music: the impact of American pop music in Europe’ in *Superculture: American Popular Culture and Europe*, C.W.E. Bigsby (ed.), (London: Paul Elek, 1975), p.135

<sup>154</sup> Ibid

<sup>155</sup> Thompson, p.103 (producers like George Martin, Norman Smith, Joe Meek etc played a crucial role to the British popular music of the time)

experimentations existed in broader terms within the British popular music of the time. However, The Beatles' status allowed them to further popularize these musical innovations. On the other hand, whilst many British bands followed these new music trends, significant others, like The Rolling Stones, remained faithful to their blues influences.

The Beatles achieved the culmination of their efforts with the release of *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* (June, 1967). Two months earlier, on 17 April 1967, their blues-influenced counterparts, The Rolling Stones, were performing in Athens. Their concert was accompanied by a large presence of Greek police which, as Ntaloukas points out, was involved in violently preventing the young audience from dancing.<sup>156</sup> The violence eventually led to the disruption of the concert, much to the anger of Mick Jagger. Nonetheless, the brutality shown by the policemen during this incident was representative of the attitude of Greek society as a whole towards rock figures like the Rolling Stones, whose version of rock music was not compatible with the 'seriousness' of what was regarded as acceptable youth behaviour. Furthermore, the brutality of this incident was also the precursor of many more instances of oppression that were to come later. Indeed, three days after the concert, Greece fell under the imposition of the dictatorship of the military junta. The Greek junta is the first of a series of important socio-political events that came to define the period of the late-1960s and the 1970s, all of which were of major significance for the youth cultures of these countries, who would now start politicizing their musical activities in more obvious ways. As a result, the next phase of rock in the countries under consideration here ('development with local elements'), accompanied as it was with the increasing international visibility of the counterculture, was most importantly infused with political significance and the element of protest. It is to the consideration of this that I now turn.

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<sup>156</sup> Ntaloukas, p.183; when the announcement of the Rolling Stones' concert came out, most publications were alarmingly writing: 'The drug addicts are coming to Greece'.

## **Part III**

## **Chapter 5**

**‘...all I want to do is be more like me and be less like you’:**

**Development through the incorporation of national elements**

**(ca. 1968-1976)**

Part II of this dissertation dealt with the initial phases of the appearance of rock’n’roll in the countries under consideration here: what I have called the ‘reception’ period (Chapter 3), when the elements of rock’n’roll first appeared in Europe and began influencing the popular cultures of Britain, France, Germany, Greece, and Italy; and then what I have labeled the ‘imitation’ period (Chapter 4), when more active responses to these elements started to occur, both ‘top-down’, with the institutionalization of rock’n’roll, as well as ‘bottom-up’, with the imitations of the British bands in the context of the ‘beat-boom’ among the youth cultures of these countries. As seen in Part II, versions of rock’n’roll had by now existed in these countries for more than a decade, and had become widely distributed and very familiar to European audiences. In the next two chapters (Part III) I will deal with the further development of this familiarity with the rock’n’roll ‘sound’ towards the creation of something which was becoming a little more original and also more distinctly ‘local’ when seen in the context of each of these European countries. The present chapter has as its focus the development of rock music through the incorporation of national popular music idioms and the creation of more consciously idiosyncratic rock styles, while the following chapter deals with the assimilation of the elements of rock, when what I see as a more ‘intuitive’ use of rock idioms in the creation of popular music suggests that they have now begun to form part of the musical-cultural capital of the European countries under consideration here.

As we saw in the previous chapter, the ‘institutionalization’ of rock’n’roll in Britain, France, Germany, Greece, and Italy had created a rock hybrid that was regarded as unsatisfactory by its youth audiences because they considered that in the process it had lost the rebelliousness with which the original version of rock’n’roll had been associated. As a result, the institutionalized version of rock’n’roll was regarded as unable to express any opposition to the ‘official’ culture of which it was a construct. It is of particular

relevance here to note that a similar process that had taken place earlier in the USA had led to the rise of the folk music revival, which was embraced by that part of the youth culture that saw itself as more oppositional and politically aware. Dave Harker suggests that folk music, considered to be more authentic than institutionalized rock'n'roll, was taken up by students and by young people who were no longer teenagers and adolescents, and was embraced for a while as the new path of popular music.<sup>1</sup> Bob Dylan, as we saw in the previous chapter, along with many folk singer-songwriters who followed his example in America, went on to become the key figure in the convergence of the social and political seriousness of the folk movement with the sounds of rock music. As we are to see in this chapter, this tendency was also followed by many singer-songwriters in the European countries under discussion here. At the same time, another sector of the youth culture that was equally disillusioned with the political situation of the time, although less actively politically involved, turned towards the drug-influenced psychedelic music that was growing into a major phenomenon in the second half of the 1960s in the USA, and was accompanied by a rising international hippy movement that also spread rapidly to Europe. The musical expression of this position, associated initially with the style of San Francisco 'acid rock' mentioned in the previous chapter, was later engaged with by many other bands and became an international phenomenon that influenced all the countries we are concerned with here. Indeed, it was the combination of the drug-influenced sounds of 'acid rock' with the musical experimentalism of already prominent rock bands like the Beatles among others, that paved the way for more creative and innovative rock explorations in each of the countries under discussion here, something that eventually led to the explosion of rock music into many different versions of what became known as 'progressive rock'. Both of these musical strands – folk and psychedelia – were supported by and in their turn supported an increasingly visible counterculture, which manifested itself in ways that are linked both with an active political engagement in connection with folk music revivals, as well as with a seemingly apolitical stance oriented towards psychedelia.

The rise of the counterculture plays a particularly important role for the musical development of this phase, and its existence needs to be seen in the wider context of the

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<sup>1</sup> Harker, p.115



politically-charged situations to be found in each of these countries during this period. From this perspective, the rise of the counterculture and its international manifestation within a politically aware youth culture increasingly disillusioned by global political and social issues and looking for alternative lifestyles and significant changes in the system cannot be disassociated from the rise of more idiosyncratic versions of rock that were themselves introduced from outside the mainstream cultures of the countries discussed here. Of course, youth cultures had been political before in more or less active ways, but I suggest in this chapter that this is the first time in the non-English speaking world when rock idioms themselves were to be adopted widely as a way of expressing political sentiments. To understand this, it is important to take into consideration the political character that music in general and rock in particular appears to have been taking on during the period we are discussing here. In the process of exploring the phase when rock had developed through the incorporation of national musical idioms in Britain, France, Germany, Greece, and Italy, I will try to show that this development would not have been able to take place if rock music itself were not to have been given the political significance that we are to discuss later in this chapter. More specifically, the years with which this chapter is concerned – the late 1960s and the 1970s – gave rise to international political tensions that had reverberations in each of the countries discussed here; rock as a musical style is also one that has always had associations with opposition and rebelliousness, something which itself had assumed an international character by the later 1960s. At the same time there were also political tensions that were particular to each of the countries concerned, and which, so I argue, turned the internationally acknowledged oppositional features of rock music towards more ‘national’ cultural ends. In brief, I consider the development of rock towards the incorporation of national musical idioms to have been facilitated by a triangle of forces which contributed in their combination towards the innovatory and experimental character of the music of this period. This triangle is comprised of the emergence of the counter-culture; the development of active underground movements with their associated networks of independent record labels and underground publications; and the turn towards political awareness and the new search for national identity in Europe during this period (the latter can in itself be seen both as a

cause and as an effect of the politicization of youth and the rock culture). Each of these is considered separately in the sections that follow.

In the first section of this chapter I address the socio-political context of the time (ca.1967-76) in each of the countries under consideration. Second, I discuss the emergence of the counterculture and the ways in which its underground networks acted and reacted in relation to the political contexts of each of these countries. In the third section I go on to observe specific instances when rock is seen to take on an obvious political character and to be consciously connected to the political contexts of the time. This leads to the fourth section which discusses the music itself, and where I initially identify two main musical styles that characterize this period of rock development in Britain, France, West and East Germany, Greece, and Italy: singers-songwriters and progressive rock – as we are to see, in both of these manifestations of rock there is an obviously idiosyncratic approach that brings to the fore an active incorporation of national musical elements, and which represents consequently an important step towards the genuine assimilation of rock musical elements within the European countries examined here. As is to be expected, ideas relating to music and politics (more thoroughly discussed in Chapter 2) will be hovering throughout this chapter.

### **‘What’s going on?’: the socio-political context in late 1960s and 1970s**

The military junta in Greece from 1967 until 1974, the events surrounding the Prague Spring in Czechoslovakia from January to August 1968, the student riots in Paris in May 1968, the politically charged climate in Italy and the Hot Autumn of 1969-70, the Polish political crisis of March 1968, the assassination of Martin Luther King in April 1968, are only a few of the crises that marked this period. To many, 1968 itself was a key year of the second half of the twentieth century, which was particularly marked by the mass demonstrations against the Vietnam War which, still active, was creating strong feelings of opposition internationally. Another issue was the overcrowding of the universities, and, not least, there was also a growing problem over pay not keeping up with price increases in many countries during the late 1960s.<sup>2</sup> Needless to say, these problems did not end in 1968. In August 1969, as Haslam reminds us, Northern Ireland experienced the

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<sup>2</sup> Calvocoressi, p.167

Bogside riots in Derry, and in 1970, four students were killed by the National Guard at Kent State University, USA, during a demonstration against the Vietnam War. This particular event, as he points out, became the subject of the song 'Ohio' by Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young.<sup>3</sup> At the same time, the end of 1960s and the beginning of the 1970s found both the USA and Britain in an economic recession: events like the miners' strike in Britain in 1972 made this situation even more obvious.<sup>4</sup> As Haslam goes on to argue, later in the 1970s the oil crisis, ascribed to the events arising from the Yom Kippur war which began in October 1973, resulted in a further worsening of the economies of both the USA and Europe.<sup>5</sup> It is obvious from this brief overview of political events of the period that the late 1960s and early 1970s were a time of great socio-political upheaval. We shall now turn to look at ways in which this was felt in the countries with which this dissertation is concerned, before going on to consider the effects on the rock music of the period.

The imposition of the military junta in Greece took place on April 21, 1967. The 'Rule of the Colonels' took place at a period when the country was already developing industrially, and was now moving away from the poverty and deprivation it had experienced even in the early 1960s. This development was accompanied by an improvement in lifestyle in terms of material consumption. However, at the same time, basic democratic human freedoms were suspended by the junta regime: the state and the police went as far as monitoring the lives of Greek people through social control. Gatherings and outdoor meetings were prohibited, while people who were suspected to be against the junta or who expressed opposing political ideas of any kind were exiled, imprisoned, and even tortured, and therefore it can be validly argued that the economic and social improvements that the country saw during these years did not by any means reflect a general improvement in the lifestyle of the Greek population. A very strict censorship was imposed on every form of media, including books, films, and songs. As seen in the previous chapter, the violent behaviour of the police had already been experienced during the Rolling Stones' concert that took place three days before the imposition of the military junta – something which, according to Mpozinis, anticipates

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<sup>3</sup> Haslam, p.40

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, p.99

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, p.105

the role the police were subsequently to play in Greek society during the years of the junta regime.<sup>6</sup> It also reflects the way rock music was seen by the new ‘authorities’.<sup>7</sup> As Papaspilios points out, for a whole year after the junta was enforced, there was a hiatus in the creation and production of Greek rock.<sup>8</sup> However, even under the junta the consumption of foreign rock albums remained particularly high: this was further supported by the growth of the Greek economy in the 1960s, which encouraged cultural consumption of this kind. Furthermore, the dictatorship could not forbid the importation and consumption of foreign albums, not least because of the difficulties it faced in being able to ban or censor them. According to Papanikolaou, during the years of the dictatorship there had been an influx of foreign popular music into Greece, which inevitably influenced Greek youth culture. In fact, foreign record sales underwent a major increase which brought them on a par with Greek music in terms of market shares.<sup>9</sup> However, as Papanikolaou goes on to stress, this happened in parallel with the strict censorship that the junta applied to printed texts, records, radio programmes, and performances. As he puts it, the dictatorship imposed its nationalistic and populist cultural discourse ‘based on a form of folk idolatry and kitsch popular extravaganzas’, and vigorously promoted this view of culture as being the suitable one for Greek cultural consumption.<sup>10</sup>

The Greek military junta was overthrown in December 1974, after the events of the Polytechnio<sup>11</sup> (17 November 1973) and the Turkish Invasion of Cyprus (July, August 1974). After the military junta had fallen and the era of Political Reform (Metapolitefsi) began, the view that democratic demands and independent thinking were equivalent to communism subsided. These events were accompanied by the removal of the Greek monarchy, and also curtailment of the power of the Greek Armed Forces. The Greek Communist Party (K.K.E.) was legitimized after thirty years of being considered illegal

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<sup>6</sup> Mpozinis, p.180

<sup>7</sup> The events of the Rolling Stones’ concert also scarred the international image of Greece and its ability to attract performances by major bands. Indeed, this is historically supported by the long period after 1967 when no concerts by major bands took place in Greece.

<sup>8</sup> Papaspilios, p.143

<sup>9</sup> Papanikolaou, p.122

<sup>10</sup> Ibid, p.130

<sup>11</sup> Ntaloukas, p.296: The events of Polytechnio sprang out from the fact that the strongest anti-dictatorship movements grew in the universities, places that the junta used in various ways to closely regulate and observe students.

and, as a consequence, people who had been imprisoned for years due to their political beliefs were now been set free. Young people started to express their political awareness in more obvious ways, by becoming more actively involved in the political situation of the country and by developing and expressing their own views on political issues. Accompanying the quest for greater political involvement on the part of the Greek youth culture was an increasing involvement in art and culture; through the freedom and sensitivity that art offers, it gained an important place in public life as a vehicle for ideas and an expression of beliefs. This, of course, involved song-writing and playing music. It should be pointed out here that, with the fall of the junta, the exiled MikisTheodorakis (the prominent composer and songwriter who had been exiled by the junta in 1970 after being imprisoned and banished because of his political beliefs) was also able to return to Greece. One might reasonably assume therefore that, with the fresh start represented by the years of the Metapolitefsi political reforms, a new era was also about to begin for Greek rock music as well. However, the situation was quite the contrary. The years after the military junta were a period that did not have a positive impact on the development of Greek rock. Rather, as is to be seen later in this chapter, rock culture in Greece faced a significant challenge during the period of the Metapolitefsi that fundamentally affected its future development.

In Italy as well this period was one of crisis and turmoil. Since the late 1960s criminality in the country had been increasingly rising, something expressed, as Parentin points out, in activities like heavy drug usage, the involvement of the Mafia, the numerous political scandals that emerged during this period, the consequences of the Cold War, the secret service plots, the bombings, assassinations, and the atmosphere of tension that prevailed in the country at this time.<sup>12</sup> As is to be seen later in this chapter, Italy during this period was not considered a secure place, and political tensions were evident all around the country. As a result, culture in general, and rock music in particular, became heavily politicized during this period. Indeed, as Parentin also emphasizes, in Italy during the 1970s to deal with social and political issues demanded involvement in culture and art as well.<sup>13</sup> Of course, this also included music which was

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<sup>12</sup> Parentin, loc.235

<sup>13</sup> Ibid, loc.257

unavoidably influenced by the political atmosphere at this time. Nonetheless, despite the obvious politicization of music, and the fact that the Italian songs of the 1970s were a mirror of their times, they did not however express violence and vulgarity as such. In fact, as Parentin puts it, their music was often ‘so sweet as to seem surreal’: ‘Terra in Bocca’ by I Giganti (1971) which was inspired by a Mafia murder, and ‘Canto Nomade per un Prigioniero Politico’ by Banco del Mutuo Soccorso (1973) which was inspired by the death of Salvador Allende during the coup in Chile in 1973 are examples of this.<sup>14</sup>

In France the aftermath of the events of May 1968 was strongly felt. These events brought to the fore a politically active youth community which was expressing its political concerns about unemployment which had already started being felt by 1965, and which kept rising, and would keep increasing well into the 1970s until it reached a peak in 1974.<sup>15</sup> It was in this context, as is to be seen in the course of this chapter, that rock music began being actively developed for the first time in France.

In West Germany the opposition towards the influence and the involvement of the USA in the country had now begun being more visible and, in many cases, this political position was directly connected to the rock culture of the country. The student movement, and the influence of the ideas of the New Left were central in the uprisings of this period in West Germany. Anti-war, anti-American, and anti-establishment sentiments led to protests and demonstrations which resulted in violence between protesters and the police. On the other side of the wall, in East Germany, the end of the year 1970 was followed by a period of significant changes, most importantly concerning the policies and the structure of the communist party itself. The changes in the structure of the party also had a notable effect on the development of rock music in the country. More specifically, Erich Honecker replaced Ulbricht in 1971 as the first secretary of the SED, and, according to Goodboy, Tate and Wallace, he started introducing policies that were orientated towards the intensification of production, something that led to a further improvement in the standard of living within the country.<sup>16</sup> Simultaneously, under Honecker’s leadership mass entertainment, leisure activities and sports were now offered

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid, loc.241, 246

<sup>15</sup> Tinker, p.296

<sup>16</sup> Goodboy, Tate and Wallace, p.179

state support for the first time after WWII.<sup>17</sup> Ryback points out that the production and consumption of popular music benefited greatly from the more liberal stance regarding cultural production and consumption as a whole that was introduced by Honecker. As a consequence, East German rock music entered a period of positive development. Ryback goes on to suggest that this change came from the fact that Honecker's new policies appeared to have 'aligned cultural policy with the needs of East Germany's young people'.<sup>18</sup> As Goodboy, Tate, and Wallace put it,

[t]he relatively liberal climate from 1971 on permitted an explosion in the number of discotheques and rock groups, and though this led to official restrictions in 1973, when things were deemed to have got out of hand, there was no longer any serious attempt to exclude Western influences in music or dress. Indeed, one of the first liberalizing measures taken in 1971 was to ensure an adequate supply of jeans in the shops.<sup>19</sup>

From one perspective this could suggest that the long period of restricting access to Western culture by the East German state which had proved to be unsuccessful led to the realization that the engagement of East German youth culture with Western cultural idioms could not be avoided altogether. Thus, aspects of Western culture were now beginning to be accepted by the East German state itself, although never entirely unconstrained. Indeed, the East German state never really accepted these Western idioms straightforwardly, something that can also be seen in the ways rock music was treated within the borders of the country: it is a fact that until the very moment that the Berlin Wall fell, rock music in East Germany was surrounded by constant efforts towards a process of institutionalization by the state, along the lines of that seen in the previous chapter regarding all the countries under discussion in this dissertation, although in this case more calculated, more specific, and much stricter. Hence, the acceptance of rock elements during the period after Honecker became the head of state was also accompanied by official efforts to bring rock music closer to the ideals of the East German state. This process was started initially in order to rehabilitate *Beatmusik*, and

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid

<sup>18</sup> Ryback, p.135

<sup>19</sup> Goodboy, Tate and Wallace, p.180

manifested itself with the introduction of a bureaucratic mechanism designed to achieve this. As Ryback writes, '[t]he Committee of Entertainment Music, under the aegis of the Ministry of Culture and manned by ideologically "sound" individuals, was intended to police the development of official rock music'.<sup>20</sup> In short, in order for rock bands to be active, they had to conform to the ideology of the party. The state closely scrutinized the activities of East German rock bands, and applied serious sanctions when any band was considered to be 'disobedient'. The disbanding of the Klaus Renft Combo in 1975, because it was seen as too radical due to songs like 'Ketten werden Knapper'<sup>21</sup> ('The Chains are Getting Tighter') (1973) is an example of this. (Interestingly enough, the Klaus Renft Combo not only got banned, but they were also told that 'they did not exist anymore').<sup>22</sup>

Honecker's 1971 liberal cultural policy was abandoned in 1976.<sup>23</sup> This was again evident in a significant event which had an important if indirect influence on the further development of rock music in the East German state. This concerned the termination of the citizenship of the songwriter Wolf Biermann in 1976.<sup>24</sup> Biermann, as mentioned in the previous chapter, had already been banned from public performance in 1965, but had nevertheless kept on playing, performing, and recording in his apartment in East Berlin. His work was circulated in East Germany through underground tapes and by other 'illegal' means. Biermann was also very popular in West Germany, to such an extent that sound technicians were sent to his house to make recordings for CBS, the West German record company under which he was signed as a recording artist. When Biermann was given permission by the East German state to travel to Cologne (West Germany) for a concert, he was warned against performing specific songs, advice he did not follow. His decision to ignore the state's recommendations led to the revocation of his citizenship, and the refusal to allow him to return to East Germany.<sup>25</sup> This incident, Ryback has claimed, ruptured the cultural community of the GDR, and in spite of all efforts by

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<sup>20</sup> Ryback, p.135

<sup>21</sup> Sabrina Petra Ramet, 'Rock: the music of revolution and political conformity' in *Rocking the State*, p.8

<sup>22</sup> According to Shingler, after their disbanding, Renft moved to West Germany and worked as a DJ, whereas the members of the group Gerulf Pannach and Christian Kunnert were put in jail and were freed in 1977 by West Germany.

<sup>23</sup> See Goodboy, Tate and Wallace, p.186

<sup>24</sup> Leitner suggests that the revocation of Biermann's citizenship happened in 1977 (Leitner, p.30)

<sup>25</sup> Ryback, pp.138-9; Goodboy, Tate and Wallace, pp.186-189 etc.



prominent East German writers and artists to request that this decision be reversed, the state refused to reinstate Biermann's citizenship. As a sign of protest, more than a hundred prominent East Germans asked to emigrate to the West, causing what Ryback calls a 'cultural bloodletting'.<sup>26</sup> A very important rock figure who left the GDR at the time was Nina Hagen (the daughter of Biermann's wife, actress Eva-Maria Hagen) who, after her debut with her band Automobil in 1974, became famous in the GDR, to the extent that by 1976 she was considered to be a 'national sensation'.<sup>27</sup> Despite the fact that an official request was made to Nina Hagen in order to persuade her to remain in the GDR (she was offered a car, a house with a swimming pool, and a monthly television show to get her to reconsider), she nevertheless persisted in her decision to move to the West. After that, as Ryback points out, she was never again mentioned by the East German press.<sup>28</sup>

The events of these years had given rise to disappointment with Honecker's policies and his failure to prove that he had indeed liberalized the state's attitude towards rock music. Ryback reports that during the 1977 celebrations for the founding of the GDR, when the band Express Berlin was performing at the Alexanderplatz, 'seething tensions among young people erupted in violence'; the involvement of the police led to violent rioting at a very serious level, with numerous injuries, many arrests, and also deaths.<sup>29</sup> In Ryback's words,

The frenzied battle on the Alexanderplatz traumatized the Honecker regime and scarred a generation of East German youth. Until that moment, East German officials had not fathomed the intensity of youth hatred towards the regime, nor had the young people comprehended the potential ruthlessness of the state. Neither had realized its own potential for violence. In the next few years, East German officials and rock fans, emotionally bruised by the cultural turmoil of the mid-1970s, sank into a morass of mutual suspicion and maleficence. The limitations of Honecker's cultural policy, like the physical

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<sup>26</sup> Ryback, p.137

<sup>27</sup> Ibid, p.205

<sup>28</sup> Ibid, p.205

<sup>29</sup> Ibid, p.140

limits of the Berlin Wall, proved both frustratingly impenetrable and brutally restrictive.<sup>30</sup>

As should be obvious from the previous discussion on the situation in East Germany, even the change towards a more liberal political position introduced by Honecker proved to be disappointing and did not lead to a more general liberal stance when it came to freedom of cultural expression. This had a direct effect on rock music, one that culminated, as seen in the events at the Alexanderplatz, in severe violence. However, the freedom of the rock idiom in strictly musical terms during this period, despite the fact that it was short-lived and inevitably affected by the bureaucratic mechanism that surrounded it, did have an important effect on the development of rock music in the country, although one that, as will be discussed later in this chapter, had very different manifestations than was the case with the development of rock music in the other countries under discussion here.

In contrast to the situation in Greece, Italy, France, and West and East Germany, the situation in Britain was in many respects different. The period of the late 1960s in Britain was on the one hand one of increasing prosperity and liberalization, which has suggested to some commentators that there was little call for the expression of direct revolutionary action of the kind that was taking place in the other European countries represented in this study. This view is one taken by Mitchell who maintains that this was the result of the politics of the British Labour government: the legalization of consensual homosexual sex between people over 21 in 1967, the reduction of the age of majority to 18 in 1968, and the passing of the Race Relations Act in the same year. Additionally, the death penalty had now been abolished, and liberal reforms were enacted both on the issues of divorce and also of abortion.<sup>31</sup> Seen in these terms, the political and social situation in Britain during the late 1960s was not one to give rise to or to support any strongly revolutionary spirit. On the other hand, however, it can also be argued that the situation was far more complicated than this, and that there had been anti-establishment feeling strongly in evidence throughout the 1960s, and which had led to many political demonstrations and marches, particularly in relation to nuclear disarmament, and which

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid, pp.140-141

<sup>31</sup> Mitchell (2005), p.14

culminated in the anti-war demonstrations of 1968. This is the view taken by Haslam, who, without denying the positive socio-political developments identified above,<sup>32</sup> nonetheless specifically points out that this was also an era that by the end of the 1960s heralded the end of the boom years (something that became increasingly apparent in the course of the 1970s), and, not least, it was a period when growing sentiments of racism also started being strongly evident in the country.<sup>33</sup> In any case, as will be further discussed later in the chapter, the late 1960s and the 1970s was a politically charged period for Britain in many ways, both in the context of the everyday life in the country itself, but also within a broader international framework, the political significance of which did not leave Britain unaffected. With the influence of the New Left political movement, and with the visible contribution of the student movement and its relation to the counterculture, Britain experienced active political involvement by the youth culture during the late 1960s. A major indicator of this is the very active anti-war movement that led to important protests and demonstrations in 1968. These protests, which were concerned mainly with the Vietnam War, but also with issues concerning American undercover involvement in supporting authoritarian regimes, often resulted in injuries and arrests. Political unrest was felt throughout the following decade which, as we are to see later, gave rise to issues that were of particular relevance to the British context itself, not least the militant actions related to Northern Ireland (and the bombings that took place in various cities in Britain in the 1970s), as well as with the economic recession that was by now becoming apparent. Seen in this larger context, I would suggest that British youth culture during this period was certainly drawn into the political climate of the time, something that can also be seen to be reflected indirectly in the British rock music of the late 1960s, which was the main medium of musical expression for the British youth culture.

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<sup>32</sup> Haslam, p.31

<sup>33</sup> Haslam, p.19

### **‘Last year’s dream was a terrible scheme’: counterculture, underground networks, politics and rock music**

The counterculture was not a phenomenon that arose in isolation. Rather, a significant aspect of the counterculture was the underground network that accompanied it, both in terms of publications, as well as of independent record labels. It needs to be pointed out here that the phenomenon of the counterculture is distinct from that of subcultures.<sup>34</sup> The counterculture initially manifested as a middle-class phenomenon, with its main attitude the rejection of the world system: members of the counterculture turned to explorations of ‘alternative institutions’, in opposition to the mainstream and establishment culture of the time. Clarke, Hall, Jefferson, and Roberts suggest that the years between 1967 and 1970 were the most prominent years of the existence of the counterculture.<sup>35</sup> The counterculture was a phenomenon of international character and it was manifested in two different ways, as has already been mentioned in the opening part of this chapter: the ‘hippie’ culture, defined by mysticism, drug usage, the breaking down of conventional life-styles, and the idea of the creation of a ‘utopian’ alternative culture; and the politically oppositional culture, which was driven by community and protest activities, and was characterized by active political involvement and liberation goals.<sup>36</sup> Both of these strands were visible in each of the countries this dissertation is dealing with. Indeed, either in the form of political action, or in the form of the negation of societal norms which was the approach of the hippies, the counterculture is always seen as an expression of opposition – the fact that it was sooner or later associated with rock music in these contexts simply provides further evidence of the political importance rock music acquired at the time. Additionally, although counterculture is considered to be mainly a western phenomenon, evidence of the counterculture was also to be seen in Japan, Mexico, and also the former Soviet Union. In the latter case, which is relevant for this dissertation since East Germany is used here as our reference point to Eastern rock, the popular music which was used by the counterculture mainly involved Beatles songs which, as Bennett

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<sup>34</sup> As has been mentioned previously, though subcultures have been thoroughly discussed in the course of Popular Music Studies we do not deal with the phenomenon here as it is not of a direct relevance to the focus of this study.

<sup>35</sup> Clarke, Hall, Jefferson, Roberts, p.60-1

<sup>36</sup> Ibid, p.61

suggests, became the expression of resistance against the rigid and strict communist system and its opposition to the West.<sup>37</sup>

The counterculture, as has already been pointed out, was accompanied by a whole network of underground activities, including the organization of festivals and live performances, a circuit of independent record labels, and alternative press publications. For example, the two main British alternative magazines of the time were the *International Times (IT)* launched in 1966,<sup>38</sup> and *Oz*, launched in 1967.<sup>39</sup> In France, the underground press featured publications like *Actuel* (1967) which, apart from music, touched upon issues that were not officially approved like sex, radical politics, comic strips, and psychedelia.<sup>40</sup> In West Germany there were numerous alternative publications in the late 1960s and 1970s, most of them having a regional circulation. Examples are *song* (music-orientated, launched in 1966 but turning to issues of rock music, psychedelia and the counterculture in the late 1960s), *Der Metzger* (from 1968), and *Päng* (1970-1976). In Greece, it was the student-produced *Protoporia* (1971, forced to stop circulating in 1972 by the junta authorities) that touched upon issues that were of interest for the youth culture, like anti-fascist movements, descriptions of the anti-fascist events in Latin America, and information about musical and cultural events that connected the youth communities of the time.<sup>41</sup> Relevant publications in Italy were *Re Nudo* (first published in 1970 in Milan, but circulated all over Italy) which dealt with music, drugs, sexual freedom, and social issues. It also organized a series of music festivals and competitions throughout the 1970s. Another Italian underground publication was *Tampax* (from 1972 in Turin). The alternative press publications that accompanied the emergence of the counterculture in each context were directly linked to the production and consumption of underground music.

Indeed, one reason for, and at the same time one outcome of the existence of the counterculture had been the development of this very underground network of press and music production. Evident in each country dealt with here, this network, which was initially acting outside the demands of the mainstream record industries, managed to

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<sup>37</sup> Bennett (2005), p.337

<sup>38</sup> Harker, p.108

<sup>39</sup> Haslam, p.27

<sup>40</sup> Drott, p.161

<sup>41</sup> Ntaloukas, p.310

support the development of rock musical idioms that were not compatible with what the official culture was promoting at the time. The rock music created by these underground networks was initially influenced by the music of the American and British counterculture, mainly by artists like The Beatles, Bob Dylan, and others. Needless to say, it was the freedom allowed the artists in creative terms by the independent labels that increased the opportunities for more creative and even experimental engagement with rock idioms, and this is partly what led to the development of rock music through the incorporation of the kind of national musical elements that are being looked at in this chapter. However, the role of independent record labels should not be over-romanticized. As Harker suggests, it is a fact that indie labels had also been, just like the majors, profit-orientated, and they did care about selling their product; in this sense, they were found in a position where they exploited individuals while at the same time they themselves were exploited by the majors.<sup>42</sup> Nevertheless, there is no doubt that their existence did pave the way for greater freedom in terms of musical expression, and this is what helped most the development of rock music at this stage. This is an argument that can be applied to all the countries in question. For example, the British independent labels Immediate, Reaction, Track Records, Island Records, and Straight Ahead contributed to the popularization of important rock bands of the latter half of the 1960s onwards.<sup>43</sup> In France, it was the independent labels Byg and Futura that supported the existence of important progressive bands like Magma, and Le Gong that will be considered later.<sup>44</sup> In Italy, as Fiori points out, the emergence of small independent labels like L'Orchestra, Cramps, Ultima Spiaggia, in combination with a significant growth in the number of festivals run by the Left, favoured a turn by Italian rock, driven by the ambitions of the musicians in artistic terms, towards satisfying the musical demands of the public.<sup>45</sup> We could mention at this point that, again, West Germany exemplifies further freedom in these terms, something that can be linked to the fact that it had never since WWII had a centralized control of its cultural outputs. According to Burns and van der Will, there were over a thousand firms in West Germany which were themselves controlled by six major companies (EMI-

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<sup>42</sup> Harker, p.106

<sup>43</sup> Gillett, p.381, 388

<sup>44</sup> Looseley (2), p.40

<sup>45</sup> Fiori (1984), p.272

Electrola, Ariola etc); these had an output that could cover every musical style.<sup>46</sup> In contrast to this, in East Germany there were no independent record labels, and the music outputs in the country during this period remained the ones released by the state record label, Amiga. It was a similar situation in Greece, where there is no information about any independent record labels during this period.

As should already be obvious, the late 1960s and the decade that followed formed a period of political conflict, to which the youth culture responded actively. The activities of the counterculture, either in their political or their seemingly apolitical hippy form, were direct or indirect manifestations of this response. Surrounded and supported as it was by an underground network, the counterculture was therefore able to communicate the expression of this politicization. I now turn to the discussion of specific instances in each of the countries we are looking at that show the direct relationship of counterculture, music, and politics during this period of the development of rock music.

### **‘We live in a political world’: Placing music in a political context**

As has been already mentioned, the beginning of the assimilation process that I see as the period of development in most of these European countries coincides musically as well as ideologically, and is manifested mainly in political terms. The relationship between politics and music in broader terms has already been discussed in Chapter 2, and what this section aims to do here is to bring the previous discussion of music and politics into the context of the development of rock in the countries under consideration during this period. One thing that needs to be pointed out here is that the politicization of music during this period took a variety of forms, particularly in relation to the two different strands of the counterculture mentioned above: the hippy counterculture and the politically-engaged counterculture. The former was characterized by types of what could be called ‘indirect political action’ which took the form of rejection or refusal of direct engagement with the established political system in favour of the exploration of alternative lifestyles; the latter was characterized by ‘direct political engagement’ through demonstrations and protests directed at changing the existing political establishment.

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<sup>46</sup> Rob Burns and Wilfried van der Will, ‘The Federal Republic 1968 to 1990: From the Industrial Society to the Culture Society’ in *German Cultural Studies: An Introduction*, Rob Burns (ed.), (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), p.269

Indeed, the merging of music, counterculture, and politics in the European context of the late 1960s should not be surprising given the importance of the interconnections that characterize this period. Specifically the period between 1968 and 1970, which Holm-Hudson calls one of ‘considerable social turmoil’ both in the USA and also abroad, due to events like the assassinations of Robert F. Kennedy, Martin Luther King, the shootings at Kent state, the student riots in Paris, Mexico City, and Prague, sparked the creation of music both in rock and in jazz that were fuelled by the notion of withdrawal. However, it can be argued that notions of ‘withdrawal’, ‘refusal’, and ‘rejection’ quickly become indistinguishable from forms of ‘escapism’. In Holm-Hudson’s words: ‘[s]ongs such as Crosby, Stills & Nash’s “Wooden Ships” (1969) and concept albums such as Paul Kantner’s *Blows Against the Empire* (1970), did not merely call for withdrawal (or “dropping out”) from society, but from active flight from it’.<sup>47</sup> The introduction of themes related to ‘science-fiction dystopia’ and ‘extraterrestrial escape’ appear in many instances in the popular music of Britain, France, Germany, Greece, and Italy during this phase and will be further discussed later in this chapter.

As Mitchell observes, rock music during the 1960s had an unambiguous revolutionary character both in the USA and also in Britain, and he points out that the revolutionary character of British rock music began earlier than the rest of the countries we are looking at here, a statement with which I largely agree.<sup>48</sup> According to Mitchell, the fact that Britain, unlike other countries during this period, did not have a specific point of reference that would justify revolutionary action (as seen earlier in this chapter) should not create the misconception that a politically active counterculture did not exist in the country, one that also expressed itself in musical terms. Rather, Britain, from the mid-1960s onwards, exemplifies a broad revolutionary attitude in its popular music, although one that often seemed to have no specific direction. For example, songs like The Who’s ‘A Legal Matter’ (1965) and The Kinks’ ‘Dead End Street’ (1966) deal with ‘domestic misery’, ‘Good Morning, Good Morning’ by the Beatles (1967) and Manfred Mann’s ‘Semi-Detached Suburban Mr. James’ (1966) tackle British social issues of the time, whereas the Rolling Stones’ ‘Factory Girl’ (1968) and The Kinks’ ‘Situation

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<sup>47</sup> Kevin Holm-Hudson, ‘Apocalyptic otherness: black music and extraterrestrial identity in the music of Magma’ in *Popular Music and Society*, 26/4 (2003) p.281

<sup>48</sup> Mitchell (2005), p.9



Vacant' (1967) express issues concerning the working class.<sup>49</sup> The radicalism of British rock music, as Mitchell goes on to argue, was not so much expressed as a direct challenge to the state, but it was nevertheless strongly felt in the way the boundaries between musical styles were challenged, and also in the way topics that were not socially accepted, like masturbation (The Who, 'Pictures of Lily', 1967) and transvestism (Pink Floyd, 'Arnold Layne', 1967) were presented.<sup>50</sup> Mitchell, however, is also careful to point out that British rock music was not straightforwardly political in the kind of terms we are considering here. As he points out, the attitude of the majority of British rock bands concerning revolution was rather ambivalent: he specifically speaks about the Beatles, the Animals and the Kinks, writing that 'most British artists were happy to ape American musical styles, though shorn of their political content'.<sup>51</sup> Although this statement might be true, this should not deprive the songs these artists released of their political content: instead, the politically charged times and the existence of a youth culture and of countercultures that were characterized by more active political awareness should point to the fact that, whatever the intentions of the songwriters and the performers might have been, these songs were often interpreted as political by the audience. Moreover, it needs to be pointed out once more that rock music has always remained a musical idiom that is related to politics in Britain. A direct way in which this was evident in the period discussed in this chapter was the Rock Against Racism movement that began in the country around 1976.

Perhaps the most obvious political youth culture during the period we are looking at was the one in France, something seen also with the events of May 1968 when student riots and workers strikes, as Looseley puts it, almost 'toppled the state'.<sup>52</sup> The French counterculture was influenced by anglo-american trends, but expressed itself in more active political ways, being further informed by the distinctively French experience of the late 1960s. The factors that led to this intensification of political consciousness were the Algerian War, the growing dissatisfaction with the overcrowding of the universities, and the conservatism of the French education system, as well as a swelling resentment

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<sup>49</sup> Ibid, p.14

<sup>50</sup> Ibid, p.14

<sup>51</sup> Ibid, p.15

<sup>52</sup> Looseley (1), p.31

towards Gaullist paternalism, satirized by the slogan “be young and shut up”.<sup>53</sup> However, the politically-aware French youth community of the time did not initially engage with rock music to the same extent as was the case in Britain and Italy, and, as Looseley also points out, popular music in general did not play a vital role in the events of May 1968.<sup>54</sup> Mitchell argues along similar lines, when he writes ‘[i]n France, the nation in which, arguably, the most radical and youth-driven events of the decade occurred, popular music was not seen as an adjunct to revolt. In contrast, for most of the Sixties, it was identified as a manifest impediment.’<sup>55</sup> Mitchell goes on to argue that popular music in late-1960s France was ‘ridiculed’ for creating passive consumers and accommodating the interests of bourgeois culture.<sup>56</sup> In fact, Mitchell emphasizes that any interest in popular music in France before 1968 could be considered as an acceptance of the culture promoted by the mass media and therefore as demonstrating indifference towards the important political issues of the period. He goes on to argue that at that time the charts featured names like Johnny Hallyday and Claude François, both of whom did not deal with anything revolutionary in their work.<sup>57</sup> Of course, both Hallyday and François are representatives of the *yéyé* style, a musical style that was entirely irrelevant to the French counterculture. However, the antipathy towards rock music that was such a feature of the radical youth culture in France up to 1968, and which was largely the result of the rejection of French pop music, was soon to change with the emergence of more radical French rock music following the events of May ’68.

The youth culture protesting in May ’68 was more orientated towards the anglo-american counterculture *behind* rock than towards the music itself – they were particularly inspired by ideas of, as Looseley puts it, ‘personal creativity and difference, sexual liberation, hippiedom’. However, he goes on to add, ‘the newer anglo-american sounds – from *Sergeant Pepper* through Dylan to the Grateful Dead, Hendrix and Mothers of Invention – became not simply the soundtrack but the medium of “contestation”’. It was to this sector of French youth that the *yéyé* was largely

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<sup>53</sup> Ibid

<sup>54</sup> Ibid

<sup>55</sup> Mitchell (2005), p.9

<sup>56</sup> Ibid

<sup>57</sup> Ibid, p.10

irrelevant.’<sup>58</sup> In 1968 French counterculture turned away from the dissatisfying institutionalized version of French rock’n’roll, namely *yéyé*, to embrace the sounds of a more psychedelic and experimental anglo-american rock scene, as well as the electric protest songs of Dylan and others. According to Looseley, the French youth culture became influenced by the work of musicians like the Rolling Stones, Pink Floyd and Jimi Hendrix, and it was with French versions of these songs that the rebellious spirit of the late 1960s was ‘lodged’.<sup>59</sup> But this itself led to a further paradox: the French youth community was itself divided in its views on how the anglo-american cultural idioms should be considered at this point, since in some respects these represented everything that the French counterculture was standing against. Indeed, the state of rock’n’roll in France in the mid- and late-sixties did not allow for its use in revolutionary terms precisely because it had become so institutionalized, and this is partly why it remained largely absent from the youth revolts in France. Furthermore, French youth culture had the alternative of being able to turn to genres of ‘high or avant-garde culture’ (like Surrealism, Free jazz, Dada), or, even, the *chanson* or folk music styles (both of which were further strengthened in the 1960s in order to counteract the success of rock’n’roll).<sup>60</sup> Nonetheless, despite their at times negative position towards anglo-american popular music, the relationship was again not straightforward since it was actually popular music’s technological and consumerist possibilities that rendered it able to communicate revolutionary sentiments more widely.<sup>61</sup> As is evident from the above discussion, the relationship between the French political counterculture and rock music before May 1968 is paradoxical. Indeed, it seems that notwithstanding their admiration for the ideology and music of the anglo-american counterculture, the political youth culture in France was initially reluctant to accept active engagement with anglo-american rock idioms on their part as a suitable soundtrack to their revolutionary attitude. This was mainly because of their opposition towards mass culture, as well as American culture itself, and not because they opposed to the sounds of rock music as such. However, Looseley claims that despite the fact that the events of May 1968 appear to have no relation to popular music

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<sup>58</sup> Looseley (1), p.32

<sup>59</sup> Ibid, p.39

<sup>60</sup> Mitchell (2005), p.11

<sup>61</sup> Ibid

(especially the *yéyé*), they are important for the history of French popular music in a different way: they were formative in leading to the French change of attitude towards rock music. In Looseley's words: 'Indeed, French pop only took off in the wake of May, gradually ceasing to be a superimposed product and becoming the more complex, organic phenomenon it already was in America or Britain.'<sup>62</sup>

I suggest that the shift of French popular music, and, more specifically, French rock music, towards becoming a more 'organic phenomenon', and the crucial connection of this shift to the political context of the times, is not a coincidence; it took place at the beginning of a period when rock music in France was entering the phase which I have called 'development through the incorporation of national popular music idioms'. Seen from this perspective, it can be argued that it was from the point when French youth culture started using rock musical idioms as a means to express deeper thoughts and emotions particular to their own environment, that these idioms started to move towards becoming assimilated by the French popular music vernacular. The argument that 1968 could be seen as the turning point in the appropriation of rock'n'roll idioms is supported both musically (Looseley) and ideologically (Warne). As Mitchell points out, with the appearance of politically-aware groups like Ange, Magma and Lard Free in the late 1960s, rock music in France experienced for the first time freedom in the expression of issues like mind-expanding drugs, sexual liberation, ethnic awareness, and spirituality, quite apart from political commentary.<sup>63</sup> At the same time, rock idioms started being incorporated into French popular music styles other than rock music. As Looseley's puts it, 'from the early 1970s one may detect – in *chanson* and in popular music generally – a drive to experiment by appropriating rather than imitating Anglo-American styles and rooting them in French experience, to restore authenticity by expressing oneself in a language (metaphorically and literally) of one's own but *reinventing* that language in the process.'<sup>64</sup> Indeed, this can be seen as supporting my position that during this period, because of the consideration of rock idioms as suitable for the expression of political sentiments that were particular to the French experience, these had now begun being seen as elements that were accepted within the French popular music vernacular. However, as

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<sup>62</sup>Looseley (1), p.34

<sup>63</sup> Mitchell (2005), p.10

<sup>64</sup> Looseley (2), p.39

is to be seen later, this did not mean that the process of assimilation had taken place fully at this stage.

In West Germany the political climate started to become more intense after the police shot the student Benno Ohnesorg during a demonstration in West Berlin against the visit of the Shah of Iran in June 1967. The political awareness evident during this period in West Germany also took the form of protests against the Vietnam War and opposition towards right-wing politics in general. At the same time, anti-American and anti-imperialist sentiments arose, and numerous young people became involved in civil rights organisations (most notably APO), as well as the early activities of the left-wing terrorist organisation RAF (also known as the Baader Meinhof group).<sup>65</sup> Some bands emerged in the late-1960s that were overtly political, like Amon Düül II. The politically-orientated bands of the time distanced themselves from the creation of rock songs with lyrics in the English language that was still the norm for West German rock music. As Larkey suggests, these politically-orientated rock groups sprang out of the student movement subculture that used serious German lyrics for their songs in the 1960s and 1970s: these included bands like Lokomotive Kreuzberg and Floh de Cologne, which, nonetheless, did not achieve much visibility at the time.<sup>66</sup>

In East Germany the politicization of music took place rather differently, as might be expected, given the different political context. As seen earlier in this chapter, during this period the East German state became more tolerant of rock music, although this tolerance came with restrictions and the need for alignment with state ideology. One way in which this is evident is the fact that, in order for East German rock bands to be successful, they had to be incorporated into the official system of the state. This was the context in which numerous East German rock bands surfaced and were promoted and supported by the state during this period, and for the first time many new albums were released. As we are to see later, the rock bands that were supported and promoted by the state were at the same time distrusted by rock audiences as having conformed to the system. However, the flip side of the coin, as argued by Wicke and Shepherd, was that by being more successful, rock musicians also gained more active participation in the

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<sup>65</sup> Ulrich Adelt, 'Machines with a heart: German identity in the music of Can and Kraftwerk' in *Popular Music and Society*, (2012), p.4

<sup>66</sup> Larkey (2002), p.240

Committee for Entertainment Arts, something that gave rock music a real voice in the state system, albeit one directed by the state itself.<sup>67</sup> Nonetheless, although some of the most successful rock bands in the GDR seemed to have been incorporated within the state's mechanism at the time, these should not be seen as accurately representing the attitudes of the East German youth culture and rock culture as a whole. It would be an oversimplification to consider that the youth population in the East European countries, and, more particularly, in East Germany, simply followed and reflected Party ideology. Instead, as Smith proposes, they were active and cannot be simply be passed over as insignificant 'in reflecting the forces that shaped them and ... their societies'.<sup>68</sup> Bearing this in mind, it should come as no surprise that the East German counterculture was expressed in musical terms as well. This is supported by Larkey, who claims that there were independent East German bands that deliberately used the English language for their songs, not only to avoid censorship, but also, according to Larkey, to 'repudiate and actively withdraw from the official institutionalized context and discourse of what the government popularized as "GDR" rock. In effect, these musicians announced that the GDR was an irrelevant context for making music'.<sup>69</sup> This follows Maas and Reszel's point that throughout the history of popular music in the GDR there had been 'a gap between the official politics of popular music and the live scene, in which young people found some space to follow their own musical interests and to ignore the SED's musical dictats'.<sup>70</sup> This gap is what represents the political character of rock music in the East German context.

As has been pointed out earlier in this chapter, although the imposition of the military junta initially suspended the development of Greek rock, it nevertheless did not prohibit all musical activity. The clubs kept on operating, the bands kept on playing live concerts, and successful Greek rock songs kept on being composed, although the vast majority of these conformed to the kind of institutionalized rock that characterized the previous period. In fact, the mainstream 'rock bands' of this time had gradually been

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<sup>67</sup> Wicke and Shepherd, p.33

<sup>68</sup> Fiona M. Smith, 'Between East and West: Sites of Resistance in East German Youth Cultures' in *Cool Places: Geographies of Youth Cultures*, Skelton, Tracey and Valentine, Gill (eds.), (London: Routledge, 1998), p.290

<sup>69</sup> Larkey (2000), p.6

<sup>70</sup> Maas and Reszel, p.267

transformed into professional pop orchestras. During most of this period the military junta was making extensive use of the media for propaganda, and it was applying strict censorship on songs and other cultural forms, sometimes to such an extent that artists who were considered dangerous for the regime experienced extreme consequences. This is evident in the way Mikis Theodorakis had all his work and songs (even ones that were not of a political character) banned, and, to avoid them leaking on to the black market, even his albums that remained in storage were burned.<sup>71</sup>

Despite the highly censorial junta regime, both countercultural strands existed in the country: the politically active anti-dictatorial youth culture (mainly comprised of students with a revolutionary ideology) and the psychedelic hippy youth culture (most evident from 1970 until 1972); it was the latter who managed, despite the difficult social conditions of the time, to keep the rock movement alive through the underground. Although not reacting against the military junta as directly and as obviously as the anti-dictatorial youth culture, it succeeded in challenging the authorities in other ways: by being concerned with the issue of 'sexual liberation' and by experimenting with mind-expanding drugs like LSD. The strictly illegal status of drug usage and the attachment of the Greek psychedelic counterculture to ideas of euphoria and hedonism gave their actions a directly revolutionary and political character in what could be seen as the rejection of the conservatism that was still so prevalent in Greek society in general. In both its manifestations the Greek counterculture was concerned with issues like the Vietnam War, the French May events, the Prague Spring, the Greek dictatorship, and overall, like the majority of their international counterparts, with an all-pervading sense of Utopian ideals.<sup>72</sup> In addition, ideas related to gender equality and feminism emerged in Greece for the first time through the hippy counterculture. The growing visibility of the Greek psychedelic youth culture eventually attracted the hostility of the military junta which attempted to control the phenomenon in direct and indirect ways: the police proceeded to cut the long hair of hippies,<sup>73</sup> and prominent media figures (like Nikos Mastorakis who we encountered in the previous chapter) were employed by the authorities with the task to present the message of psychedelic culture in ways that would

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<sup>71</sup> Ntaloukas, p.296

<sup>72</sup> Ibid, p.29

<sup>73</sup> Ibid, p.256

make them appear unattractive to the Greek youth community.<sup>74</sup> In addition, strict measures were also applied against rock music as such. As Mpozinis points out, the band Dragons were censored for their song 'The First Gun', and the bands MGC and Makedonomachoi were disbanded with the claim that they were not compatible with the ethics and ideals that the military junta was promoting. This treatment of Greek rock culture, as Mpozinis goes on to add, made numerous rock figures to voluntarily choose to leave the country because they could not accept the regime.<sup>75</sup>

Although the members of the Greek psychedelic counterculture largely embraced anglo-american musical idioms, their counterparts, the politically active youth groups that represented the opposition towards the junta regime, turned away from the use of rock musical idioms and orientated themselves towards folk-influenced musical styles, and the mainly acoustic work of Greek singer-songwriters. This led to the appearance of a new Greek popular music style, the *Neo Kima* (literally translated as New Wave, but not to be confused with the genre of the punk-influenced New Wave), which was politically-orientated. Neo Kima was initially connected to the activities of the left-wing Lamprakis Youth Group, which was concerned both with political and also with cultural issues of the time. The ideology surrounding the genre of Neo Kima was similar to the one surrounding the American folk movement, but in its Greek manifestation it did not initially take a directly militant form. Indeed, during the first years of the military junta the musical creations of the Greek youth culture remained indirect and implicit in their political content. Among the first rock-related figures who turned to a more overtly political music were Dimitris Poulidakos (connected with the psychedelic counterculture), and Dionysis Savopoulos (a young singer-songwriter who started incorporating rock elements in his work), both to be discussed later in the chapter. The turn of these two artists towards a more politically aware kind of musical creativity is indicative of a more general change in the relationship between the Greek youth culture and rock music. Despite the obstacles set by the junta regime that led to the suspension of its development, Greek rock music went through important transformations during these

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<sup>74</sup> Ibid: Another indirect way of dealing with the psychedelic counterculture was the formation of a fascist youth group by the military junta in order to attract young Greek people as its members, which, however, did not last.

<sup>75</sup> Mpozinis, p.335



years: these, I suggest, were the result of the alignment of the Greek counterculture with its international counterparts and its awareness of the international politicization of the youth movement, and also of the reactionary sentiments on the part of the Greek youth culture against the authoritarian junta regime. As Papanikolaou puts it: '[t]here is a consensus that the Greek youth music scene "turned rock" after 1967: rock music was a persistent element in the discussion of younger artists, and their main aim was to discover its subterranean, oppositional meaning'.<sup>76</sup> Whether and how this was achieved will be discussed in later sections of this chapter.

In Italy, on the other hand, the connection between counterculture, student movement, and rock music was evident in a way that was directly political. This was a direct response to the situation in the country which from the late 1960s onwards was by and large negative. In this context, the Italian youth culture rejected the conservative values, and the institutions of the country. In Parentin's words, 'A new consciousness was emerging among young people, bringing huge changes in customs and music became the expression of a collective and social identity as never before'.<sup>77</sup> The Italian youth culture, responsive as it was due to the problematic context it found itself in at the time often became violent. Parentin claims that there had been many violent incidents from 1968 onwards, not only between left and right wing extremists, but also between both of them and the police.<sup>78</sup> It was during this period that the first manifestation of Italian rock music emerged: Italian progressive rock, which became a prominent phenomenon fuelled by political connotations.

Parentin, who has written extensively on the genre of Italian progressive rock argues that Italian progressive rock was heavily political, directly linked to the left-wing movement, and to the student protest movement (with which many band members were affiliated) that supported the organization of concerts and festivals. In Parentin's words: '[t]o go to a concert in the Seventies was considered a political act and you had to take precise, resolute positions'.<sup>79</sup> The political character of this musical style had important consequences for the artists that acted in this genre, since they were often judged not in

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<sup>76</sup> Papanikolaou, p.132

<sup>77</sup> Parentin, loc.220

<sup>78</sup> Ibid, loc.230

<sup>79</sup> Ibid, loc.263

terms of their musical creativity, but in terms of their political position – suffice it to say, they were dismissed if they did not have a clear political position. Some of the most politically committed bands were Area, Stormy Six, and Osanna, whose work had been respected by the movement surrounding progressive rock; on the other hand, not explicitly politically committed bands like Premiata Forneria Marconi, despite the quality and creativity of their music, failed to become popular among political militants (who formed the main body of the Italian progressive rock audience) and consequently were not supported in terms of live concerts and neither were they promoted by the network that supported this musical style.<sup>80</sup> However, because of the success and the wide audience that Italian progressive rock eventually reached, the political orientation of the style became less of a strict rule: in fact, many bands became successful by just following the musical trend, without themselves being militant or politically involved, while there had been instances where bands representing a right-wing ideology and also the Christian movements turned to progressive rock as well.<sup>81</sup> It is nevertheless the case that, for as long as it remained prominent, Italian progressive rock always remained linked to left-wing ideology. As a result, bands that followed a different path were often ‘punished’: for example Museo Rosenbach were considered to be fascists and forced to quit because of the cover of their album *Zarathustra* and the use of Friederich Nietzsche as inspiration for their song lyrics.<sup>82</sup>

The politicization of Italian music at the time did not only manifest itself in terms of the political orientation of the bands, but also in the attitude of the audiences as well. Commentators of the time suggest that rock concerts in the 1970s were not safe events for one to attend, mainly because of the ‘Riprendiamoci la musica’ (Let’s take the music back) movement where audience members demanded free attendance for the concerts in ways that often led to conflicts with the organizational managers and the police. Fiori maintains that the beginning of this movement dates in 1971 when, in his words, Italy entered the ‘European rock circuit’. He uses as one of the earlier examples the concert of Led Zeppelin in Milan in July 1971. However, the actions of the representatives of

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<sup>80</sup> Ibid, loc.269, 284

<sup>81</sup> Ibid, loc. 290, 323, 329: However, as Parentin informs us, openly right-wing bands like Janus, Acroama, and La Compagniadell’Anello, did not achieve success, and they, as he puts it, ‘had to operate in almost “clandestine conditions”’

<sup>82</sup> Ibid, loc.313

‘Riprendiamoci la musica’ were not the result of their affinities to rock music itself, since they often appeared to be unaware of which band was playing in each occasion. Instead, as Fiori points out, their actions are to be seen as attempts to create disturbance in order to give visibility to their claim for ‘democratic music’.<sup>83</sup> In addition, the actions of the movement (that often resulted to extreme violence, especially between the years 1973-1975) were not restricted to concerts from famous bands, but were applied to every live concert organized, eventually making attendance at any live performance in Italy during this period a dangerous and unsafe event. This resulted in a notable decrease in the number of audience members that attended and supported Italian live music and created financial problems for the majority of Italian bands that soon became unable to support themselves economically.<sup>84</sup>

As seen in the section above, either from top-down in terms of the attitude of the official culture towards it, or bottom-up in terms of its underground manifestations and its treatment by the audience, popular music was given important political significance. Of course, the examples presented above might be seen as extreme cases of this, but the political significance of popular music can be expressed in different ways according to where, how, and by whom it was being produced or consumed. However, it should be remembered at this point that the musical styles considered here do not represent the whole musical output of the countries under consideration for this period, but form a fraction of their popular music scenes. Indeed, the ‘mainstream’ British, French, German, Greek, and Italian music industries and broadcasting systems were producing and distributing their institutionalized versions of popular music, following the tendency looked at in the previous chapter. However, during this period of important political events it was the underground development and circulation of rock musical idioms that mainly expressed the political sentiments of the youth cultures and the counterculture of the time, and it is my position that this is the important factor that characterized the development of rock music through the incorporation of national idioms discussed here.

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<sup>83</sup> Umberto Fiori, ‘Rock music and Politics in Italy’, p.266; it is important to note at this point that Drott, p.182 mentions a similar situation in France in 22/9/1970 during a concert by the Rolling Stones that members of an organization which linked rock music with left-wing ideology created disturbances by demanding free pop music and thus attacked rock’s commercial nature. I do not include this in the actual text, since it is not clarified if this was a situation that happened frequently, or if it was an isolated event.

<sup>84</sup> Parentin, loc.399

More specifically, I consider that the ‘validity’ of rock idioms as suitable to be used for the expression of political concerns particular to the realities of British, French, German, Greek, and Italian youth cultures reveals that these idioms had begun being actively incorporated into the popular music vernaculars of these countries. This observation suggests that the politicization of rock idioms in these five European countries was an important step which brought them closer to their eventual assimilation in their national popular musics. We shall now turn to discuss in more detail the ways in which rock idioms were treated in these countries, and their development through the incorporation of national musical idioms, by particularly referring to the work of progressive bands and singer-songwriters from each country under consideration.

### **‘It’s all in the music’: Discussing the new rock styles**

Appadurai wrote that: ‘[i]f the genealogy of cultural forms is about their circulation across regions, the history of these forms is about their ongoing domestication into local practice. The very interaction of historical and genealogical forms is uneven, diverse and contingent’.<sup>85</sup> This is particularly relevant for the events that characterize the period this chapter is dealing with, since the situation in each of the contexts we are concerned with is not only important, but is also very specific as well. Appadurai’s words suggest that the processes of domestication of a specific cultural form vary from place to place both chronologically and stylistically. The sections that follow bring this view in the context of this dissertation. The distinction between the ways rock music was developed in these countries during this period is most evident in stylistic terms, since chronologically these developments vary insignificantly. This is due to the similarities of the cultures of these five European countries, their close geographical position that allowed for reciprocal influences, as well as because of their more or less similar position towards the USA. However, despite their similarities in these terms, the specificities of their approach in terms of the development of rock music reveals the ‘national’ distinctions between them, and exhibits the first significantly idiosyncratic rock musical styles in each. But before we proceed to consider discussions of the music of this period, one more thing needs first

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<sup>85</sup> Appadurai, p.17

to be pointed out: unlike the situation in the reception period, when the musical style of reference was specifically rock'n'roll, and unlike the imitation phase when the institutionalization of rock'n'roll produced specific versions in each country, the periods that followed present a more complicated case. This had already begun to be evident by the time the British bands presented their distinct approach towards the creation of a new kind of rock music, seen at the time as 'beat music', which became prominent during a time when Bob Dylan and his followers were also influencing the youth cultures in these countries. Other influences, like the psychedelia of the San Francisco style, as well as soul music and Jamaican idioms, were also absorbed into anglo-american rock and were consequently taken up in other countries as well. Indeed, the period we are looking at in this chapter, the late-1960s and the 1970s, was a time of musical proliferation, something manifested significantly in terms of the variety of rock music styles that appeared. However, in my view, the rock styles of this period that contributed most importantly in taking the process of assimilation a step further in the countries we are looking at here can be narrowed down to two important musical strands: progressive rock, and the work of singer-songwriters. We will consider each of these separately.

### ***Progressive rock***

The late 1960s was the period of experimentation in rock music – this was initially evident in the experimental and progressive rock styles that emerged both in the USA and Britain from 1966 onwards, as well as in each of the countries considered here a few years later. As is to be seen, the progressive rock styles that emerged in Britain, France, Germany, Greece and Italy during this time revealed a clear transition in the engagement with rock idioms that was distinct from the engagement with rock music seen in the imitation phase. The combination of the underground and of the independent communication networks of the counterculture, the rejection of the mainstream music industry, and the alternative network of communication that surrounded them led the engagement with rock music towards the creation of idiosyncratic, experimental material particular to each of the contexts looked at here. In many respects progressive rock could be seen as the musical extension of the expression of the counterculture. This is also supported by Anderton, who, drawing on Whiteley and Moore, argues that '[t]he

experimentation, stylistic complexity and blurring of genre distinctions found within progressive rock match the ideologies of the counterculture, which valorised free expression, individuality, contradiction and the testing of alternative modes of existence'.<sup>86</sup> He goes on to add that since the influential ideals of the American counterculture were developed in each country in relation to the particular local social, political, and economic situation, '[t]he eclectic, pick'n'mix approach to the blending of musical styles and instrumentation helped lay the framework for the development of a wide variety of progressive rock styles in the early 1970s'.<sup>87</sup> Of course, progressive rock as a musical style in itself calls for such an approach due to its highly experimental nature.

Britain is considered to be the pioneer in the development of progressive rock, since it is the country in which it initially manifested as an important popular music phenomenon, soon after the mid-1960s. As Haslam puts it, the second half of the 1960s, and, more particularly from 1966 onwards, saw the beats and mods being replaced by a music influenced by hallucinogenic drug taking, long hair, and what he describes as 'rambling songs'.<sup>88</sup> With their strong links to the counterculture, artists like The Yardbirds, The Doors, Cream, Pink Floyd, and Jimi Hendrix (in my view, all progressive in one way or another), made a significant contribution to the British music of the time, while subtly influencing in the process the progressive music of other countries as well. By the second half of the 1960s, British progressive rock was growing in significance as a musical style that was infused with artistic and political ambitions, as well as with anti-commercial aspirations. One notable influence for the development of British progressive rock was the educational system of British art schools, of which many of the most influential rock artists of the 1960s (John Lennon, Pete Townshend, Ron Wood, Freddie Mercury, Jeff Beck and Eric Clapton among others) had been students. According to Wicke, as a result of this influence the British progressive rock of the 1960s emphasized both the romantic ideology of autonomy and creativity, as well as the avant-garde manifestos of the early twentieth century art.<sup>89</sup> Musically, British progressive rock was

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<sup>86</sup> Anderton, p.423

<sup>87</sup> Ibid, p.423-24

<sup>88</sup> Haslam, p.25

<sup>89</sup> Wicke (1990), pp.94-97

largely characterized by what was considered as the ‘negation’ of the ‘temporal’. As Wicke suggests, especially in the late 1960s, rock music was increasingly being perceived as a sound experience: the rhythmic emphasis that previously characterized rock music became downplayed in favour of different sound explorations. Indeed, British progressive rock musicians made an obvious turn away from the physical attributes of the *beat*, and moved towards the explorations of *vibration*, in pursuit of what Wicke calls the ‘harmonious total sound of body, feeling, consciousness and music’: in doing so, the bands of the British progressive rock scene turned to the incorporation of sounds from non-European musical traditions in their work, and to ‘experimentations with electronic and recording techniques which went beyond the limitations of the song form’.<sup>90</sup> The duration of the songs increased dramatically, and progressive rock musicians drew heavily both on classical, as well as jazz music traditions, in search for harmonic and melodic complexities. In general, it is hard to define the musical styles that constitute British progressive rock. If it is to be described with one label, this should be ‘musical experimentation’.

British progressive bands retained their affinity with their national tradition as seen in the incorporation in their work of themes related to medieval myths, as well as references to Tolkien. They also explored themes based on space and ‘interplanetary travel’, a tendency that is characteristic of the rock creations of this period in other countries as well. ‘Astral Traveller’, ‘Starship Trooper’, the album *Tales from Topographic Oceans* (1974) by Yes, and Pink Floyd’s *Dark Side of the Moon* (1974) are relevant examples.<sup>91</sup> Progressive rock bands (Yes, Pink Floyd, Genesis, Emerson Lake and Palmer) remained very successful in the 1970s, and their work strongly emphasized ‘trained musicianship’, which was expressed in ‘experimental, grandiose, twenty- or thirty-minute epic songs’.<sup>92</sup> Some of the British bands had been particularly influential and successful outside the British borders as well (Jethro Tull’s album *Thick as a Brick* reached number one in the American charts in 1972, whereas bands that were not prominent in Britain created affinities with other progressive rock scenes, as is the case of

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<sup>90</sup> Ibid, p.99

<sup>91</sup> Haslam, p.128

<sup>92</sup> Ibid, p.176

Henry Cow who became popular in Italy).<sup>93</sup> Progressive rock was very important in creative and experimental terms during this period in Britain and it was particularly influential for the progressive rock styles that emerged in the rest of the countries we are looking at in this dissertation

As has been mentioned earlier, after the events of May 1968 the French popular music scene saw the emergence of bands that were more revolutionary and progressive, and which remained active most notably between the late 1960s and early 1970s.<sup>94</sup> According to Anderton, for the development of French progressive rock a ‘network of jazz and jazz-influenced musicians melded a range of styles into a distinctive mix known as Zeuhl’.<sup>95</sup> The musical characteristics of French progressive rock consisted the combination of jazz, twentieth century European classical music, and American rhythm’n’blues and soul.<sup>96</sup> In their musical explorations these bands combined the rock sounds with elements from free jazz, the sounds of synthesizers, and often with influences from the work of *chanson* representatives like Brel and Brassens.<sup>97</sup> These tendencies are evident in the work of bands like Gong, Magma and Ange.<sup>98</sup> The founder of Magma, Christian Vander, is considered to be the ‘leader’ of the French progressive rock movement, not only in terms of his musical capabilities, but mainly because of the innovations he brought to this musical style. Most notable among these was the creation of a new language for the lyrics of the songs of Magma: the extraterrestrial Kobaïan.<sup>99</sup> I see Vander’s act of inventing a new language as very significant in this context. Indeed, it is particularly interesting that this language invention in the genre of progressive rock should have happened in France, the country among the ones this dissertation is dealing with that had been the most protective of its indigenous culture in general, and of its

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<sup>93</sup> Ibid, p.90; it is important to note that the close affinities large groups of British youth had now developed with soul music was not shared with the American youth culture. Soul was an idiom that during this time had been more successful in Britain than in its birthplace the USA.

<sup>94</sup> One of the first examples of French progressive rock is the psychedelic album *Les Maledictus Sound* (1968) by Jean-Pierre Massiera.

<sup>95</sup> Anderton, p.429

<sup>96</sup> Ibid

<sup>97</sup> Looseley (2), p.39

<sup>98</sup> Here we could add the Greek band Aphrodite’s Child who were based in France since 1968 and became popular in the progressive rock network of France and other European countries as well.

<sup>99</sup> Holm-Hudson, p.281. An interesting parallel to this is found in the Greek rock film *Aldevaran*, released in 1976, where, in the words of the ‘rock poet’ we have another example of language invention in this period (Ntaloukas, p.49)



native language in particular. From this perspective, I suggest that Vander's action was one that was particularly political, even if his intentions as such were purely artistic in nature. Magma's work was orientated towards escapism, extra-terrestrial imagery, and their musical narrative is placed in the fictional planet Kobaïa. This orientation is one that is directly aligned with the general ideology that surrounded the spirit of this period and concerns the use of extra-terrestrial imagery as reference to 'escapism'. The cosmic extra-terrestrial element is generally evident in the French progressive rock scene, and is particularly encountered in the work of bands like Gong where, as Anderton observes, the 'psychedelia-influenced jazz-rock has strongly comic as well as cosmic overtones'.<sup>100</sup> Other bands that worked in the same genre are Ange, Triangle, Zoo, Martin Circus, and Red Noise.

Nevertheless, the French progressive rock movement is not only characterized by its musical experimentation and its thematic orientation. It is also distinct for its ideological direction and its position within the French cultural system. Indeed, one characteristic aspect of these bands which is particularly stressed by Looseley, was their rejection of, as well as their rejection by, the mainstream music business and broadcasting industry. As Looseley puts it, these bands, 'living in communes or squats, supported by an underground press (*Le Pop* and the more successful *Actuel*) and by two underground labels (Byg and Futura) sought to establish an alternative live-music circuit. This included the national network of youth centres, the MJC's (*maisons des jeunes et de la culture*), universities and Woodstock-style festivals.'<sup>101</sup> In these regards, the affinities of French progressive rock with the counterculture and its surrounding alternative ideology and underground networks is more than evident.

In West Germany progressive rock manifested mainly in the blending of rock and electronic music, and formed the style that eventually came to be known as Krautrock<sup>102</sup> which evolved in the late 1960s and subsided by the end of the 1970s. The German version of progressive rock music involved, as Anderton points out, numerous

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<sup>100</sup> Anderton, p.429

<sup>101</sup> Looseley (2), p.40: the first festival took place in 1969, shortly after the Woodstock festival, organized by Byg and the magazine *Actuel*, though after difficulties with the French authorities it had to switch location to Amougies in Belgium

<sup>102</sup> 'Krautrock' is an umbrella term given to the German experimental music scene of the late-1960s and 1970s by the British press, which was adopted by the German bands themselves.

experimental avant-garde bands which were influenced by aleatoric music, minimalism and musique concrète. The creative work of these bands was based on extensive explorations of the potential of synthesizers and drew heavily on the music explorations of Karlheinz Stockhausen, Pierre Schaeffer, and Pierre Boulez.<sup>103</sup> The most characteristic feature of Krautrock music was the development and exploration of the possibilities of synthesizers and the technological manipulation of sound with instruments such as the modular Moog or VCS3, in a manner that exceeded any effort made by experimental bands in other countries, including Britain and the USA.<sup>104</sup> This is strongly exemplified in the work of bands like Popol Vuh, Tangerine Dream, Kraftwerk, and Cluster, among others. Krautrock, although it eventually went on to become the specifically idiosyncratic German version of progressive rock, was nevertheless initially influenced by the British and American psychedelic rock styles. As is also suggested by Anderton, it was the turn to musical exploration that British and American psychedelic cultures exemplified in the second half of the 1960s that created the basis for the experimentations with sound, style, and form by the German progressive rock bands.<sup>105</sup> The influence of the British and American psychedelic scenes in these terms can be heard in the first attempts of German progressive rock bands, like the debut albums of Amon Düül II, Can, and Embryo (all released in 1969 and 1970) who combined the elements of this influence with classical, electronic, and jazz music, while they also often turned to experimentations with non-Western musical styles, something particularly evident in the work of Embryo.<sup>106</sup>

As German progressive rock evolved, an evident distance from anglo-american musical influences was consciously created by the German musicians, including from the african-american origins of rock music. I suggest that the conscious rejection of the blues origins of rock music by the German bands in favour of the sounds of electronic music is not to be seen as a musical phenomenon in isolation, but should be better placed in the ideological and political context of the time. More specifically, notwithstanding the fact that the movement surrounding Krautrock did initially drew inspiration from the ideas of freedom and individuality connected to the American counterculture, it nevertheless

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<sup>103</sup> Anderton, p.425

<sup>104</sup> Ibid, p.426

<sup>105</sup> Ibid, p.425

<sup>106</sup> Ibid, p.425-26

exemplified a rejection for everything that was taken as representing American culture as a whole: significant among these was the emphasis on the commerce, especially in its manifestation in rock'n'roll music and Hollywood films. Hence, as Adelt also suggests, these bands were consciously distancing themselves from the blues tradition, and intensified their efforts to 'create something distinctly German or at least non-American out of the rubble of World War II'.<sup>107</sup> It has to be remembered here that during this period West Germany experienced political tensions that were based on strong anti-American sentiments, and were particularly related to the student movement and the counterculture, something that was discussed in the earlier parts of this chapter. From this perspective, it is hard to dissociate the efforts of the German progressive rock bands to turn away from anything that could be seen as American from the general anti-American sentiments that grew among the politically mobilized youth culture of the time. The paradox here lies with the fact that at the same time, as Anderton points out, these bands also showed their obvious rejection of their parent culture, and they sought explicitly to distance themselves from any association with the German Nazi past. In doing so they avoided any reference to German folk music, as well as to the representative works of the German serious musical tradition, especially those of the period of Romanticism.<sup>108</sup> Thus, German progressive, or Krautrock, bands, went on to search for a new musical language that resembled neither American popular music, nor the German musical past: this was achieved with the extensive use of synthesizers, the turn to different song structures, as well as the use of a metronomic beat instead of the rock'n'roll off-beat that was the prominent rhythmic feature of the mainstream German popular music of the time.<sup>109</sup> It has to be pointed out here that Krautrock is a phenomenon particular to West Germany, and no equivalent was developed in East Germany.

As seen earlier, the Greek rock scene in the late 1960s remained aligned with the institutionalized rock version of the Greek music industry. As a consequence of this large parts of the audience lost their interest in the rock idiom and turned to different popular music styles of the time, something that led numerous Greek rock bands (successful in the previous period) to break up. This fact was in itself important for the new period the

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<sup>107</sup> Adelt, p.2

<sup>108</sup> Anderton, p.425

<sup>109</sup> Adelt (2012), p.3

Greek rock scene was now about to enter. This is because a new generation of Greek rock bands emerged, often from new collaborations of members of previously ‘golden youth’ rock bands, which was the case for Exadaktylos (Εξαδάκτυλος), Makedonomachoi (Μακεδονομάχοι), and Socrates Drunk the Conium.<sup>110</sup> At the same time, bands with new rock musicians were also formed like Poll, Damon and Fidas (Δάμων και Φιντίας), and Morca among others.<sup>111</sup> The Greek rock bands of this period, unlike the Greek rock representatives of the periods of reception and imitation, were more aligned with the developments in the international rock scene and they were influenced both by the hard rock sound and, most notably, by music experimentation. Drawing inspiration from the international music of the time, these bands often turned to experiments with Greek folk and traditional music and instruments, as well as the use of non-western musical influences as well. However, it can be argued that Greek progressive rock bands did not develop the style in ways that could create a version of it that was particularly idiosyncratic, despite the fact that a few bands made an important contribution through their musical experimentations.<sup>112</sup>

As Ntaloukas argues, MGC (previously a ‘golden youth’ band of the ‘imitation’ period which transformed in 1967 into a progressive band with the participation of Dimitris Poulikakos, a notable member of the Greek psychedelic movement) was one of the most important bands of this period in Greece. However, the importance of the band does not lie in its musical approach, but is instead to be seen in its representation of and its significance for the Greek rock counterculture. More specifically, MGC was not a musically ground-breaking band for Greek psychedelia since, not only did they not write original songs, but they sang covers of British and American songs in the English language. However, after two members of the band got arrested for smoking marijuana the group came to symbolize the oppression of the Greek youth culture by the dictatorial authorities. This in a sense connected the countercultural ideas and the rock music of the

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<sup>110</sup>Pennanen, p.116: Aphrodite’s Child, one of the most popular Greek rock bands of the period could be added here as well, but the specific band, though formed in Greece by Greek musicians was mostly associated with the French progressive rock scene, as it left Greece soon after its formation.

<sup>111</sup> Ntaloukas, p.35: another band to be included, according to Ntaloukas, was Bourboulia who, however, did not manage to release any songs at the time they were active and, though evidence of their work exists, are not accessible due to copyright issues.

<sup>112</sup> Mpozinis, pp.350-351

time, and put them in the same line as the opposition against the junta.<sup>113</sup> Like MGC, the first Greek progressive bands (even the ones who composed their own songs and did not rely on covers) used the English language for their lyrics, a tendency abandoned by the majority (with the exception of the band Socrates) after 1970, when the song ‘Garyfalle, Garyfalle’ by Peloma Mpokiou. The song marked the beginning of what Ntaloukas sees as the second phase of progressive rock in Greece, characterized by the combination of psychedelic music with Greek lyrics.<sup>114</sup> Representative bands of the second phase were Nostradamos, Eksadaktylos, Damon kai Fintias, Morca, as well as Poll. The latter, despite its short lifespan (just one year), is very important in these terms since it made an important impact on Greek rock music by choosing to use music and symbols that had an indirectly anti-dictatorial message.<sup>115</sup> Ntaloukas maintains that Greek progressive rock reached its maturity in 1976, when the album that consolidated everything that Greek progressive rock represented was released (the songs of the album were written between the years 1970 and 1972, but never got released until 1976). This was *Metaforai-Ekdromai o Mitsos* by Dimitris Poulidakos that clearly expressed disdain for the use of the idea of the ‘Nation’ in the junta propaganda, and also touched upon other anxieties that concerned the Greek youth community, clearly to be heard in the song ‘Ti Mas Les?’ (‘What are you Telling Us?’).<sup>116</sup> This particular album proved that psychedelic music and active political resistance could be combined to create something musically satisfying.<sup>117</sup> However, its release came after the junta was overthrown, and at a period when interest in progressive rock was subsiding in Greece.

Nonetheless, in none of the countries under consideration here did progressive rock grow to become such a phenomenon as it did in Italy, and its manifestation as *rock progressivo Italiano*. The development of Italian progressive rock is considered by many to mark the point when a distinctive Italian rock music style emerged, since its development came in stark contrast to the marginal position that rock idioms had in the country until then (foreign popular music elements performed by artists who included

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<sup>113</sup> Ntaloukas, pp.236-238

<sup>114</sup> Ibid, p.260

<sup>115</sup> Ibid, p.268

<sup>116</sup> Ibid, p.276

<sup>117</sup> Ibid, p.281

several styles in their repertoires).<sup>118</sup> Indeed, progressive rock was the first rock genre to become notably successful in Italy, and it is important to underline that this occurred not because of promotion by the record industry; in fact, it was only after this style gained visibility and achieved a wide following within the underground that the major labels realized its potential and tried to ‘exploit’ it by incorporating it into the mainstream. As Parentin suggests, although it is hard to specify the time of its birth, most critics agree that Italian progressive rock began with the release of the album *Collage* by Le Orme in 1971, which was unexpectedly successful, and became influential for other bands like Premiata Forneria Marconi, I New Trolls, Delirium, Osanna.<sup>119</sup> Numerous Italian progressive rock bands had been previously active as beat bands (cover bands) during the imitation period, and turned to progressive rock either by using the same name or changing it. For example bands like Le Orme, Premiata Forneria Marconi (previously I Quelli), Banco del Mutuo Soccorso, I New Trolls, Delirium (previously I Sagittari), Metamorfosi (previously Frammenti), I Dik Dik carried their experiences as beat bands and informed these with other influences in order to contribute to the development of this distinctively Italian rock style.<sup>120</sup> Other progressive rock bands were Stormy Six, Banco del Mutuo Soccorso, Premiata Forneria Marconi, and Area. The fact that Italian progressive rock was linked to the left-wing student movement, and was supported by an underground network structured around the organization of festivals and band contests, gave bands from each part of Italy the chance to become known to each other, to exchange ideas, and to make themselves visible to the audience. This in itself allowed them to form what Parentin calls ‘a true musical and generational movement’.<sup>121</sup> (According to Drott, the situation was similar in France, even if at a much smaller scale, where the political festivals that were giving the bands performance opportunities were crucial for the development of French rock during this period as well.<sup>122</sup>)

Musically, Italian progressive rock is characterized by experiments with electronic, avant-garde, jazz, rock, classical, and ‘ethnic’ (Italian and Mediterranean folk)

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<sup>118</sup> Fiori (1984), pp.269-270

<sup>119</sup> Parentin, loc.87, 94

<sup>120</sup> Ibid, loc.71,77

<sup>121</sup> Ibid, loc.192

<sup>122</sup> Drott, p.201

musical styles.<sup>123</sup> Premiata Forneria Marconi's guitarist Franco Mussida describes this musical style as one that combined the elements of song, jazz improvisation and classical tradition, with the inherited Italian influences of melodrama (Puccini, Mascagni), and with the influence of contemporary serious music.<sup>124</sup> Additionally, Italian progressive rock bands explored rhythmic patterns other than those associated with rock music, shifted away from the 4/4 meter, and experimented with tempo changes.<sup>125</sup> As Parentin points out, they also put emphasis on the lyrics of their songs, making use of 'literature, poetry, politics and social comment as well': however, due to its political character, the lyrics had to be in the Italian language and in the rare cases when bands turned to the English language they were criticized negatively.<sup>126</sup> Italian progressive rock became so influential as to attract the involvement of musicians that were not representative of the progressive rock movement, especially between the years 1972 to 1975. For example, bands that were not progressive as such released progressive rock albums (Pooh, Nomadi), while singer-songwriters made use of progressive rock arrangements in their work during this time (Francesco Guccini, Fabrizio De Andrè).<sup>127</sup>

The political importance of Italian progressive rock has been discussed earlier in the chapter. However, I see this musical style as being important in ways that were indirectly political as well, and which can be seen as the main reasons that informed its development into something so distinctly Italian. More specifically, in their search for a distinct musical language and their turn to the musical experimentation characteristic of progressive rock, the Italian rock bands initially distanced themselves from the african-american origins of rock music (as is also seen in other European progressive rock movements, mainly the West German *Krautrock*). As Fiori puts it: '[i]t was precisely when they seemed to be distancing themselves from the new foreign music that the Italian musicians were in fact appropriating it'.<sup>128</sup> It can be argued, therefore, that in order

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<sup>123</sup> Prato (2005), p.226

<sup>124</sup> Franco Mussida (guitarist of Premiata Forneria Marconi), as cited in Parentin, loc.116: this would take an even greater extent for progressive artists from Naples, who also had carried the Neapolitan culture and music, which is a very important tradition on its own.

<sup>125</sup> Parentin, loc.958; a frequently used rhythm pattern is that of the 'Tarantella'

<sup>126</sup> Ibid, loc.143, 165

<sup>127</sup> Ibid, loc.110

<sup>128</sup> Fiori (1984), p.271

for the Italian musicians to arrive at the point of infiltrating rock music and start producing their own version of it while having the confidence to isolate its elements and to use specific ones in their work, they first had to adopt it and creatively approach it as an idiom that could be used in ways that were suitable for their own 'national' expression. According to Fiori, this tendency of the Italian rock bands followed the ideology of the protest and folk movements, and aspired to promote the national form of music. In the process, Italian musicians turned away from 'the more obviously American sounds', 'even the blues roots of rock', considering those 'as a symbol of cultural and political subjection'.<sup>129</sup> However, it has to be pointed out that this tendency was not one characteristic of the Italian progressive rock alone. Indeed, the late 1960s and early 1970s was a pivotal moment in this respect in the history of post-war popular music in various European countries. In Fiori's words, in Italy, '[a]s in other European countries at about the same time, there was a search for the sources of national music'.<sup>130</sup> Hence, each of the progressive rock scenes that we looked at in this section, with the exception of West Germany for reasons that have already been explained, made use of its ethnic and folk musical elements.<sup>131</sup>

Finally, it needs to be pointed out that the label 'progressive rock' should not be seen as descriptive of a specific musical style that evolved in these countries at this point: these progressive rock scenes are often fundamentally different in their sound, and the single feature that they all indiscriminately share is their turn to music experimentation. Indeed, due to the social, political, and economic particularities of each of the countries we are looking at during this period, the progressive rock scenes of these countries could not be developed as identical phenomena. For example, due to insufficient economic resources, Italian progressive rock bands could not afford the same level of technical

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<sup>129</sup> Fiori (1984), pp.272-3

<sup>130</sup> Ibid, p.273

<sup>131</sup> A specific case in point here is Britain, where bands that were representative of the folk music revival eventually turned to the folk-rock scene. The particularly interesting point here is that, although the distinction between British folk-rock and progressive rock can be made in more straightforward ways than an equivalent distinction in the rest of the countries looked at here, I maintain that during the late-1960s onwards the British folk-rock tradition can be seen as another strand of British progressive rock music, notwithstanding the fact that British progressive rock bands often make references to pastoralism and medieval mythology (Genesis), folk-rock bands also experimented heavily with musical approaches that were reminiscent of the progressive rock of the time (Pentangle, Fairport Convention, Comus, Renaissance among others).



equipment as English progressive rock bands,<sup>132</sup> something that resulted in obvious differences between the two in terms of sound and stage appearance. Additionally, as is also suggested by Anderton, the lack of good marketing support from Italian record companies, the lack of unemployment benefit in Italy at the time (in contrast to countries like Britain) which caused the musicians financial difficulties, as well as the compulsory conscription applied in Italy led to the disappearance of numerous bands after the release of only one album.<sup>133</sup> This exemplifies how, apart from the musical experimentation itself, the development of specific musical styles and movements within a country is also heavily influenced by the particular social, political and economic situation that characterizes each context.

In this section we have looked at the work of British, French, German, Greek, and Italian progressive bands and tried to shed light on the idiosyncratic progressive rock styles that they developed during this period as these were based on the single common denominator: musical experimentation. We shall now turn to consider how the blending of rock idioms and local traditions led to other idiosyncratic developments of rock music during this period, as exemplified in the work of singer-songwriters in these five European countries.

### *Singer-songwriters*

The more active incorporation of elements of rock music in the work of British, French, German, Greek, and Italian singer-songwriters started being evident at approximately the same time as the emergence of progressive rock movements in each of these countries. The movement of singer-songwriters, which resurfaced and grew in importance in each of these countries during this period, was generally considered to represent a musical genre linked to authenticity, and was respected by the audiences in each country. Therefore, the increasing use of rock idioms by singer-songwriters during this period suggests that rock music had now begun to be seen as suitable to be incorporated in the more serious strands of the popular music scenes of Britain, France, Germany, Greece, and Italy, and that it was no longer considered to be a cultural idiom that was foreign,

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<sup>132</sup> Parentin, loc.948

<sup>133</sup> Anderton, p.427

inauthentic, and commercial by definition. Indeed, the blends that we are now turning to discuss reveal the ways in which, with the combination of the rock idioms with their own traditions of songwriting, singer-songwriters in each country legitimized further the rock idioms as elements that can be used to express more ‘serious’ musical endeavors in each country. Additionally, due to the fact that the work of singer-songwriters was based on acoustic or simple instrumentation in order to place the emphasis on the lyrics, this musical style was previously seen as incompatible with the electric instrumentation that characterized rock music. Back in the USA Bob Dylan had successfully combined the two as early as 1965, influencing many singer-songwriters in other countries as well. Nonetheless, I consider that this turn was a ‘natural’ step in the development of rock music in these countries, and is not only to be attributed to the influence of Dylan. This position will be further discussed later. As will be seen in this section, the engagement of singer-songwriters with rock idioms gave rock music legitimacy as a musical idiom that could be used in combination with the serious elements that characterized what were often seen as the ‘authentic’ strands of popular music in each country.

As mentioned in the previous section, the British rock scene during this period had been dominated by the major progressive rock bands, as well as by hard rock bands like Led Zeppelin, Uriah Heep and Black Sabbath who also achieved a large following.<sup>134</sup> At about the same time (most notably from the late 1960s onwards), singer-songwriters started incorporating rock idioms in their music. Some important examples are Tim Buckley, with his album *Blue Afternoon* (1969), as well as Nick Drake with his album *Five Leaves Left* (1970).<sup>135</sup> However, due to the sharing that historically characterizes the cultures of Britain and the USA, the use of rock idioms on the part of the British singer-songwriters was an expected development. More specifically, the British singer-songwriters were drawing on the same sources as their North American counterparts: American folk music traditions, often influenced by blues music and other african-american musical elements. In addition, rock music in Britain had already acquired the

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<sup>134</sup> Hard rock was very important and influential musical style on its own during the late 1960s. The reason it is not discussed in more detail in this dissertation is that its influence was not one to be taken further by rock scenes in other countries in order to create idiosyncratic versions, but it was rather one resembling the influence of the British Invasion bands of the imitation period.

<sup>135</sup> Haslam, p.26

status of authenticity and seriousness, and was often seen as a contrast to the commercial pop idiom that was associated with triviality and inauthenticity.

The situation was somewhat different in the rest of the countries considered here. This can be particularly observed in the French context where *chanson* had been, and still remained to be considered as the esteemed, authentically French musical idiom. Of course, to suggest that *chanson* had remained unaffected through the years would be misleading, since the instances where it was influenced by other musical elements, like jazz are relatively few (the difference lies with the fact that jazz eventually came to be considered as a serious musical element, unlike rock which was still widely seen as a trivial popular music style). However, the development of *la nouvelle chanson française* in the 1970s directly challenged the authenticity of the *chanson* tradition, while at the same time, as Looseley also suggests, further exemplified the fact that that rock idioms started to be assimilated by French popular music. Indeed, the work of the new singer-songwriters was obviously influenced on the one hand by the work of esteemed *chanson* representatives like Brel, Brassens and Ferré, but incorporated on the other hand popular music and rock idioms. More specifically, they used electric instrumentation and incorporated rhythmic treatments that resembled the styles of American soft-rock and country music.<sup>136</sup> Representative artists of the ‘new generation of politically aware artists’<sup>137</sup> of *la nouvelle chanson française* are Maxime Le Forestier (‘Parachutiste’ (1971)), Bernard Lavilliers and Renaud.<sup>138</sup> Jacques Higelin, who appeared in the mid-1970s is an important figure in these terms as his work, as Looseley puts it, ‘proved that it was possible to combine Anglo-American instrumentation with articulate use of the French language, hitherto deemed incompatible with rock’s simple duple chug.’<sup>139</sup> Bearing in mind the fact that *chanson française* had historically placed emphasis on the sounds of the French language and lyrics that were of high literary quality, Higelin’s

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<sup>136</sup> Looseley (1), p.35

<sup>137</sup> Tinker, p.93

<sup>138</sup> Portis, p.145: ‘Antoine’ is another singer-songwriter who used rock music as a vehicle for his lyrics from the beginning of his career (1965). Nonetheless, he is not included here as he does not represent directly the musical style of *nouvelle chanson française* that represented the movement of the French singer-songwriters of the time, and he must be considered instead as a notable example of creative French rock music that came from the influence of the British Invasion bands and Bob Dylan during the previous period (*Les Élocubrations d’Antoine* (1966)). In the late 1960s he brought his work closer to the *chanson* tradition.

<sup>139</sup> Looseley (2), p.46

contribution to the successful combination of these with the elements of rock is of notable significance.

However, it needs to be pointed out here that from 1968 onwards it became increasingly difficult to distinguish clearly between the three French popular music forms (*yéyé*, *chanson* and *variétés*) due to the fact that these now shared mutual borrowings and influences. In Looseley's words: '[f]rom the 1970s to the end of the century, the boundaries between *chanson*, *variétés* and *yéyé* become ever harder to mark out. For, if there is one word which summarises the stylistic evolution of French popular music since 1968, it is *métissage*: cross-fertilisation.'<sup>140</sup> This is particularly important when it comes to the development of *chanson* from the new generation of singer-songwriters considered here. Indeed, *chanson* during its heyday (between 1953 and 1961) had been, as Looseley puts it, 'entirely monocultural, turned in on itself against new influences either from outside or within France' and thus left no possibility for the younger generation to find any 'loose ends to weave a new generational music'.<sup>141</sup> As a consequence, the French youth audience turned away from the 'conservative' *chanson* tradition, and towards Anglophone pop or the French imitations of it.<sup>142</sup> With the turn of *nouvelle chanson française* towards the anglo-american rock idioms, the new French singer-songwriters brought the *chanson* tradition closer to the musical demands of the French youth audiences, while at the same time they presented a challenge to the official, protectionist, French culture of which the *chanson* had stood as the musical representation until then. Nevertheless, this is not to suggest that this was something intentional on the part of the new singer-songwriters. From my perspective, this new generation of musicians were part of the rock'n'roll generation, and most of them had been teenagers during the reception of rock'n'roll. I suggest that to them the rock idioms were ones they could relate to, and constituted elements on which they could consciously draw in order to create songs that represented their experiences. In doing so, they brought the rock idioms

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<sup>140</sup> Looseley (2), p.37

<sup>141</sup> Ibid

<sup>142</sup> Ibid

closer to the respectability of the *chanson*, while at the same time they challenged the view that French youth music was by definition apolitical.<sup>143</sup>

The German singer-songwriters of the time were influenced both by American folk music, as well as from the French *chanson* tradition. The musical style of the *Liedermacher* in West Germany was represented by politically aware artists such as Reinhard Mey, Klaus Hoffmann, Hannes Wader, and Konstantin Wecker, and it was orientated towards left-wing politics and anti-American sentiments. In East Germany, The *Liedermacher* of the time, especially after the Biermann incident discussed above, were suspicious of the state. The political nature of the *Liedermacher* genre made it more difficult for its East German practitioners to bypass the censorial practices of the state and have their records released by the state record company, *Amiga*. Bettina Wegner is a *Liedermacherin* who particularly represents this. After expressing her opposition towards the state decision to deprive Biermann's of his citizenship, she herself experienced the hostility of the state, facing restrictions on her public performances, and was unable to release any albums in the GDR. As a consequence, her album *Sind so kleine Hände* was released by the West German label CBS (1979), but never allowed in East Germany. Another East German *Liedermacherin* who was active at the time was Barbara Thalheim.

The Greek singer-songwriters of the time were also influenced by the politically-orientated American folk and French *chanson* traditions, as well as by the music of Greek 'patriotic' songs. During this period, the politically-orientated songs of Mikis Theodorakis and Manos Hajidakis were embraced by the politically active youth culture and became significant sources of inspiration for many musicians of the younger generation. The Greek singer-songwriters were acting in the musical style *Neo Kima* (New Wave) that was mentioned earlier in the chapter. The blending of rock idioms with Neo Kima began early, most notably with the work of Dionisis Savvopoulos (with the band Bourboulia). Savvopoulos began his career as an artist of Neo Kima (*To Fortigo*, 1966)<sup>144</sup> and went on to represent the intersection between Neo Kima and the rock culture with all his later work. The blending of the two began in 1968, when Savopoulos turned

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<sup>143</sup> According to Drott, p.100 one of the first instances when the apolitical character of the French youth music (and especially pop music) was being challenged was the release of a single with two songs ('La Révolution' and 'La Faute à Nanterre') by Evariste in 1968: the price of the single was kept deliberately very low, therefore showing the manipulation and profit of the record companies.

<sup>144</sup> Pennanen, p.116

to electric instrumentation,<sup>145</sup> and collaborated with Bourboulia. *To Perrivoli tou Trelou* (1968), *Ballos* (1970), *To Vromiko Psomi* (1972) all came to represent the first instances of a rock approach that was specifically Greek. It is important to point out here that during the period between the release of Savopoulos' first album and his subsequent electric turn, he came to the notice of the new junta authorities as a politically oppositional figure and he was imprisoned for a short time. After his release he spent a brief period in Paris with his wife.<sup>146</sup> After his return to Greece, the lyrics of his songs stopped being directly political, but remained nevertheless political in indirect ways. As Pennanen maintains, the indirect treatment of political matters he henceforth employed allowed him to evade the censorial practices of the junta regime, and gave him the opportunity to perform numerous concerts, and also to release his albums.<sup>147</sup> From one perspective, one could also see the electric turn that Savopoulos took after his imprisonment as an indirect way to conceal the content of his lyrics (Neo Kima was a musical style that was based on the content of the lyrics), but this is only speculation. Savopoulos, as Papanikolaou argues, is generally considered to be, after Hajidakis and Theodorakis, 'the most important individual in the metropolitan popular music scene since the 1960s'; apart from being a major representative of the political song as a composer and performer, he is also seen as the creator of the only original rock music written in Greece in the second half of the 20th century. In Papageorgiou's words: '[he] did not simply adopt the form and "wrapping" of rock, but assimilated its inner spirit and meaning, using powerful rhythmic structures while at the same time respecting traditional forms of Greek music'.<sup>148</sup> Savopoulos' work was very influential for the generation of the Greek singer-songwriters considered here, as well as for Greek rock music in general. Another important singer-songwriter during this period is George Romanos, who is notable for his use of the Greek language for his lyrics.<sup>149</sup>

The political song that the Greek singer-songwriters represented remained the main vehicle for the expression of the Greek youth culture after the fall of junta in 1974. The incorporation of rock idioms in the political song as this is evident in the work of the

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<sup>145</sup> Papanikolaou, p.137

<sup>146</sup> Ntaloukas, p.250

<sup>147</sup> Pennanen, p.115

<sup>148</sup> Papanikolaou, p.122

<sup>149</sup> Ntaloukas, p.242

Greek singer-songwriters of the time both facilitated the continuous existence of rock idioms in the Greek popular music scene, as well as their legitimation as musical elements able to express the concerns of the Greek musicians and audiences.

The Italian singer-songwriters of this period were part of the *canzone d'autore* movement that emerged in the late 1950s and early 1960s. The so-called *nuovi cantautori* followed the tradition of *canzone d'autore* by placing emphasis on the lyrics and the verbal message of the songs,<sup>150</sup> and combined this with the use of rock musical idioms. One of the earlier representatives of this movement was the Dylan-influenced Francesco Guccini, who released his debut album *Folk beat n.1* in 1967, and who, as Fabbri suggests, represents the 'reborn political song'.<sup>151</sup> Lucio Battisti, Fabrizio de André, Alan Sorrenti, Franco Battiato, and Rino Gaetano are other examples of the Italian *nuovi cantautori*.

As seen in the previous section, the incorporation of rock musical idioms in the work of the singer-songwriters in each country gave them further legitimation as elements that can be used in more serious styles of popular music, and not only as elements of a youth musical fad. The difference between the styles of progressive rock and the rock treatment by these singer-songwriters is that the former was based in the development of rock music through the incorporation of national elements through musical experimentation, whereas the latter was based in a similar development which was nevertheless based mainly on the combination of rock musical elements with the importance of the lyrical content and the sounds of the indigenous languages. Both of these approaches were equally important steps towards a more meaningful assimilation. However, the final step towards assimilation came soon after this period ended, with the reception of punk music in these countries after the mid-1970s. I suggest that the influence of punk soon after the idiosyncratic versions of rock considered above reached their heyday represents the turning point between the periods of development and assimilation. This will be discussed at the beginning of the next chapter.

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<sup>150</sup> Prato, (2005), p.226; this tendency was almost abandoned in the 1980s, but more 'commercial' *cantautori* survived and became very successful.

<sup>151</sup> Fabbri, p.139

## **In conclusion**

It is obvious that the political context of the time and the existence of the counterculture contributed effectively to the musical developments discussed above in ways that have been described in detail earlier in the chapter. The two main musical strands identified here are themselves to be seen as directly derived from these developments: the progressive rock scenes sprang out of and were supported by underground networks of communication that emerged in each country, while the work of the singer-songwriters was characterized by the emphasis of their more often than not politically-orientated lyrics. Nonetheless, it goes without saying that in each country these two musical strands were not equally influential, and were not engaged with equally by all the parts of the audience. In addition, one of these musical styles had often been more influential for one country in comparison with another (for example, the success of Italian progressive rock as opposed to the struggling nature of the Greek version of progressive rock). Moreover, in some cases one of these musical styles made a more significant contribution to the development of rock music in a specific country than the other. Italian progressive rock is the most notable example of this: although co-existing with the work of singer-songwriters, it did remain the fundamental popular music style of this period until the end of the 1970s. The same applied for West Germany, and its version of progressive rock, *Krautrock*. This can be contrasted with the situation in Greece, and also in France, where it was the work of singer-songwriters that mainly contributed to enabling the legitimization of rock idioms within their particular popular music scenes.

This does not, however, diminish the contribution that both of these musical styles made to the process of assimilation of rock idioms in these European countries, and hence it is worth considering here the ways in which each of them did this. To begin with, it has been mentioned during the account of progressive rock in these countries (although this applies less in the cases of France and Greece) that progressive rock music lacked the characteristic ‘blue’ notes, and other direct references to the african-american origins of rock music. In addition, through the experimental nature of progressive rock, the indigenous artists could incorporate in their work elements from their traditional cultures. From this perspective, one could argue that despite the fact that progressive rock was not equally influential in Britain, France, Germany, Italy, and Greece, it was



nevertheless extensively representative of the kinds of blending that could be created through the combination of rock influences with elements from their national popular musics. This, however, presented me with a striking paradox. Indeed, since my main focus in this dissertation concerns the process of assimilation of african-american musical idioms as these had been introduced in these countries through rock'n'roll, then my interest in the genre of progressive rock where these characteristics were often stubbornly absent could prove to be problematic. However, I persist in my consideration of this style of rock as one of the main vehicles for the development of rock for reasons that are two-fold. First, the fundamental characteristics of african-american-derived rock are not absent altogether, something obvious from the persistent use of basic rock instrumentation, even if this was sometimes combined with instruments other than the standard rock line-up. Second, despite their apparent decision to conceal the blues origins of rock in their work, progressive rock bands were making extensive references to the african-american musical heritage through the use of jazz in their music, something that creates the impression of a bridge between the two. This, however, can also be seen from a completely different perspective. It has been particularly stressed that some of the first major practitioners of progressive rock in each of these five countries were bands who had been previously active as 'beat' bands, and who were thus musicians who had been previously playing music that was characterized by and based on these african-american musical influences. The fact that these same bands went on to actively exclude the blues idioms from their later work can lead to the conclusion that they had by now appropriated the african-american idioms in such a way as to be able to isolate and exclude them from their versions of rock. My view is that the ability of these bands consciously to reject the use of these idioms indicates that they had previously explored them and were now critically able to consider them as unsuitable for their new versions of rock music, or for what these new versions of rock music ideologically stood for. Indeed, through the avoidance of obvious characteristics of rock'n'roll, the progressive rock bands were making statements of rejection of the USA, both in respects of its politics (which were an issue of international concern during this period), and also in respect of the commercialized nature of its culture (the latter is further evident in the development of underground, independently organized networks that supported the progressive rock

movements in most of the contexts considered here). It has to be pointed out here that East Germany is the only country looked at here that did not develop its own version of progressive rock at this time. The reasons are obvious and involve not only the difficulty of obtaining equipment and instruments necessary for the production of progressive rock, and not only the financial restrictions, but most importantly the strict censorship of the state.<sup>152</sup> However, as has been mentioned earlier in the chapter, due to the very regulatory nature of the state that restricted to the greatest possible extent the imitation of influences from the West, East Germany went on during this period to exhibit its own very specific version of rock, the first evidence of assimilation, known as Ostrock (bands like City, Gerhard Gundermann, Karat, Lift, Pankow, Puhdys, Silly). East Germany did, nonetheless, see during this time politically-orientated *Liedermacher* who aligned themselves with the singer-songwriter movement that was active during this period in the rest of the countries considered here.

In most of the countries considered here the work of the new generation of singer-songwriters took the exact opposite approach concerning the use of african-american musical influences in comparison to the progressive rock musicians. It was with their turn towards african-american musical idioms that the singer-songwriters in each country brought the rock idiom one step closer to its assimilation in each context. With the their incorporation in their work, the singer-songwriters gave the rock idioms the necessary legitimation to be included in the strands of popular music that were considered the most 'serious', 'authentic', and nationally esteemed. This particular use of rock idioms was one that resulted from the acceptance of rock idioms as able to express 'serious' issues in each context, and in most cases it was more obviously directed towards the articulation of political sentiments. In their use in this combination of authentic popular music styles and politically aware contexts rock idioms were now given the authorization to be considered as vehicles suitable for the expression of concerns that were particular for each context, as well as ones that concerned larger parts of the audience, and not only the youth culture of each country.

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<sup>152</sup> These I see as the reasons why it was easier for the East German youth culture to engage more easily with simple styles and a DIY approach (rock'n'roll, beat, and later punk music). They required less refined equipment, less money and were easier to transport and build in underground live networks in order to avoid censorship.

Continuously visible in the work of both the progressive rock bands as well as the new singer-songwriters had been the combination of rock idioms with folk musical elements of these countries. This can be seen in the light of what Bohlman, drawing on Baumann, calls 'syncretic' revival. This kind of approach of 'recuperating materials from the past and present' differs from 'purism' in that it 'consciously attempts to fuse the old and the new'.<sup>153</sup> Bohlman goes on to observe that this type of musical revivalism takes place 'bottom-up', and is of a particular significance in terms of how nationalism was expressed in the context of the everyday lives of the people, and not of nationalism in its institutional form. In Bohlman's words: 'When it comes from below, its aesthetic content is mobilized by those who want nationalism to serve them locally rather than globally. When it comes from above, it is the nation itself, in its most strictly historical forms, that takes center stage'.<sup>154</sup>

Finally, one thing that arose from the account of rock in these countries during this period is the re-emergence of the issue of language. It is obvious that in its most powerful political manifestations, rock was combined with lyrics in the indigenous languages. Nonetheless, whereas this was the unarguable case for the singer-songwriters in each of the country discussed here, the situation is less straightforward when it comes to the French, German, Greek, and Italian progressive rock scenes. In France and Italy there was almost exclusive use of the national languages, with the exception of the French band Magma and the creation of the extra-terrestrial language Kobaïan. In West Germany there was a thorough use of the German language in progressive rock music, but it was not exclusive. However, it needs to be pointed out here that towards the end of this period the exclusive use of English for the lyrics of rock songs that had been the norm, as we saw previously, during the 'imitation period' and for the larger part of the 'development period' in mainstream rock music, had now been almost entirely abandoned. Important contributors to this development had been Udo Lindenberg and Nina Hagen who, although active during the years this chapter has dealt with, their importance will be further emphasized in the next chapter where their influence is more evident. I suggest that the turn of German rock music to German lyrics is another

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<sup>153</sup> Bohlman, p.322

<sup>154</sup> Ibid

manifestation of the anti-American sentiments that had by now increased further among the West German population. The case is the opposite in East Germany, where the use of English and German alternates in the underground movements as a manifestation of opposition towards the oppressive restrictive state regulation. However, it was the German language that remained characteristic of by far the greater part of the rock music produced in East Germany during this period. In Greece, where, as seen in the previous chapters, the issue of language choice has been the cause of particular tension, it was during this period that the Greek language came to dominate the Greek manifestations of rock, although, as seen earlier in the chapter, this came after the use of English lyrics in the work of the majority of the earlier Greek progressive rock bands. I see the release of the tension surrounding language use (even in contexts like Greece where it was most stubbornly evident) as another indication of rock idioms moving closer towards their assimilation in these countries, a process that has now approached its final stage. The next chapter will discuss the achievement of full assimilation.

## Chapter 6

### **‘Forever one’: Assimilation (ca.1977-85)**

In the previous chapter we discussed the two rock music styles that indicate most clearly what I see as the development of the rock idiom through the incorporation of national musical elements in Britain, France, Germany, Greece, and Italy: progressive rock, and the work of the new generation of singer-songwriters. As argued, one of the main reasons for these developments was the politically charged climate in which these countries found themselves from the late 1960s onwards. The ways rock idioms were treated in the ‘underground’ (as opposed to ‘mainstream’) by musicians and audiences in response to these political contexts legitimized the use of rock as an appropriate means to express serious issues that, although often linked to the international political situation, were nonetheless also particular to each of the countries this dissertation is dealing with. The development of rock music in these terms can be also seen from two other perspectives: first, as the result of the existence of rock idioms in these countries for long enough to be able to be engaged with in ways that were less imitative and more creative; and second, as the result of the capacity of rock idioms to allow musical experimentation that eventually led to new blends of the international and the national in popular music that were nonetheless idiosyncratic and particular to each country.

The developments discussed in the previous chapter took place mainly in the underground, surrounded by alternative networks of communications that were often set and supported by the politically-aware counterculture. In this chapter we turn to discuss the full assimilation of rock musical idioms in these countries, as these were now accepted, promoted, and broadcast within the mainstream cultural context. The ‘full’ assimilation of rock idioms is considered here from two different perspectives: first, from the ways in which assimilation is to be observed through the emergence of national *rock* scenes in these countries; and second, from the ways in which assimilation can be observed in the use of rock idioms by French, German, Greek, and Italian songwriters for the creation of the kind of songs that were not necessarily initially part of the rock canon. This latter perspective will lead to the main argument of my thesis: that rock idioms now became an intrinsic part of the musical-cultural capital of these countries, and were

thereafter able to be used *intuitively* by songwriters, performers and audiences as part of their musical vernaculars in the creation and consumption of songs that were not ‘rock’ by definition. In the first part of this chapter, each national *rock* scene will be considered separately, in order for their particularities to be observed with reference to the influence of african-american and rock musical idioms. I suggest that the comparison of their differences in constant reference to their similarities can further support the view that it is in the observation of the distinctions between these *rock* scenes (even if these are not always strongly felt) that the influences of the particular context in which each emerged make themselves more strongly felt.

For the second account of ‘full assimilation’ I apply a comparative ‘analysis’ of chart songs from three of the countries considered here in order to show that rock idioms are now being used throughout the popular music spectrums of these countries, something that demonstrates that these have now been assimilated as part of their musical and cultural capital. They became, therefore, parts of what Regev sees as the ‘institutionalized cultural repertoire’ of these countries, idioms through which, in Regev’s words, ‘members of a national or local community perceive its boundary’.<sup>1</sup> Regev goes on to say that these idioms, ‘become [...] the specific cultural capital and habitus which – “incarnated” in individuals’ tastes, bodily expressions or ways of talking – defines their membership in the national or local community and their sense of difference’.<sup>2</sup> As was seen in the previous chapter, african-american and rock musical idioms did not reach full assimilation in the popular musics of Britain France, Germany, Greece, and Italy without having previously been met with resistance, opposition, and even rejection, and were often seen as ‘corruptive’ to the indigenous cultures. Indeed, as Crothers has put it, ‘while people across the world are likely to decry the changes to their culture that are occurring at any given moment, in time, most people will recognize the resulting hybrid as distinctively “their” culture’.<sup>3</sup> It is this idea that underpins my arguments of ‘full’ assimilation presented in this chapter.

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<sup>1</sup> Motti Regev, ‘Rock aesthetics and musics of the world’ in *Theory, Culture, and Society*, 14/3 (1997), p.137; The term ‘institutionalized cultural repertoire’ is borrowed from Lamont.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid

<sup>3</sup> Crothers, p.192

Nonetheless, before I turn to the consideration of assimilation from the two perspectives mentioned above, it is important to discuss two other issues that played significant roles for this process. I will begin with a brief overview of the emergence of punk music, and how it influenced French, German, Greek, and Italian popular music. I argue that, by adding significantly to the developments that took place in the previous period, this led to what I see as the final step on the route towards real assimilation. I will then turn to discuss the crucial contribution to the development of rock music within their borders by the central national institutions of these countries. As mentioned earlier in the dissertation, the focus here on *national* popular music lies in the space created between the top-down work of institutions as seen in the efforts of the nation-state in each country to create a national identity for its people on the one hand, and the bottom-up, everyday lives and experiences of the people in each nation on the other hand. Despite the fact that both of these aspects have been constantly addressed in direct and indirect ways throughout the dissertation, the importance of the nation-state for the development of distinct rock musics in each country is here hard to ignore. But before we proceed to a more detailed consideration of this, we shall now turn briefly to observe the influence of punk in these countries.

### **‘no way, punk – go home’**

Punk music was a style that emerged as a contrast to the ‘manufactured’ and ‘pretentious’ character that rock music, as the ‘sophisticated’ form of expression of the student movements, and an indication of the musical virtuosity of rock musicians, had taken during these years. Punk contrasted the rock ideal of ‘perfection’ as this was presented in ‘polished’, lengthy, experimental musical projects by the major rock bands of the time with its simple, dilettante character, crude instrumentation, and its aggressive, loud, cynical, and offensive attitude. The musical roots of punk can be traced to the exchange of influences between the early manifestation of punk in the New York underground rock scene (New York Dolls, Velvet Underground, The Stooges), the British glam rock (David Bowie, T-Rex, Roxy Music), and British pub rock (Brinsley Schwarz, the Count Bishops, the Hamsters, Eddie & the Hot Rods, Dr. Feelgood, Ian Dury). Punk gained visibility and prominence, and came to define an ‘ideology of rejection’ around 1975 in Britain when,

according to Bloomfield, Malcolm McLaren<sup>4</sup> began his attempts to form a band that would be ‘hyper-confrontational’: the result of these attempts was the formation of The Sex Pistols.<sup>5</sup> Other British punk bands were The Clash, Siouxsie and the Banshees, The Damned, and The Buzzcocks from Manchester.<sup>6</sup> Punk rejected and it was itself rejected by the mainstream record industry, and it developed a DIY ethic supported by an underground network of independent record labels and its own underground press (fanzines). Despite its underground character, punk music gained massive visibility at the time, something that can be attributed to the coverage of important publications of the British music press like *The New Musical Express*, as well as the support of some radio DJs, like John Peel of the BBC.<sup>7</sup> However, punk created strong feelings of opposition and moral panic because of the provocative style and the offensive attitude of both its practitioners and fans, as well as because it came to be associated with violence.

As Wicke suggests, punk music in Britain came to represent the embodiment of the social problems of the time, mainly the huge unemployment, and the conservatism of the government. However, this was not expressed in politically active ways, but with attitudes of indifference, hopelessness, and lack of prospects for political action – by ‘boredom’.<sup>8</sup> The desire of the punk movement to offend and provoke was also carried to the fashion styles that surrounded it (outrageous haircuts in bright colours, heavy make-up, clothes decorated with metallic accessories, provocative prints with improper words, images of violent or pornographic material, dog or bike chains): in fact, music and image came to be inseparable for punks. Finally, although apolitical in its first inception, punk was eventually seen as political in many cases. Indeed, it was not only the aggressive and offensive character of the music that allowed for the expression of feelings of frustration created by the socio-political context within which it first appeared, but also the efforts of the punks to shock with their outrageous appearances that was a response and a confrontation to that same context. Whereas the Sex Pistols were less overtly politically

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<sup>4</sup> Myth has it that McLaren had been the manager of the New York Dolls between 1973 and 75, and the split of the band within a short period of time led him to return to the UK wanting to start a music movement that combined the ideas and artistic experiments of the New York underground with a reactionary attitude.

<sup>5</sup> Bloomfield, p.68

<sup>6</sup> Peter Wicke (1990), p.136

<sup>7</sup> Wallis and Malm (1984), p.155

<sup>8</sup> Wicke (1990), p.140-143



orientated (although this is an ironic statement for the band that released ‘Anarchy in the UK’ and ‘God Save the Queen’), The Clash became more socially and politically aware (for example in ‘White Riot’). Nonetheless, at its initial appearance in France, Germany, Greece, and Italy punk literally ‘shook’ their popular music scenes, more often than not by being associated with feelings of opposition.

French punk developed around the same time with British punk, influenced initially by the New York scene, and later by British punk itself. Looseley maintains that British punk was particularly popular in France because of its simplicity, the rejection of the American blues harmonies that dominated the rock idiom from its initial manifestation as rock’n’roll (based on I-V-IV), as well as the use of an ‘English rather than feigned American accent’.<sup>9</sup> However, the notable development of French rock after the influence of punk is not to be seen solely from a musical perspective, but in its surrounding context. Punk brought back the notion of amateurism, the idea that music can be made with limited musical skill, little practice, and minimum equipment. Thus, from the mid-1970s, France saw, mainly in the provinces, the notable proliferation of amateur and semi-pro bands which were supported by the significant growth of a network of independent record labels that represented the DIY mentality of punk. As Looseley puts it: ‘a number of small, informally run companies sprang up enabling non-mainstream bands to avoid the interference and dispossession involved in working for the majors.’<sup>10</sup> This enabled French punk to develop outside the mainstream, avoid institutionalization, escape commercialization, and be used to express thoughts, emotions, and political attitudes that the mainstream culture would have normally silenced. French punk bands of the time were Métal Urbain, Stinky Toys, Asphalt Jungle, Bijou and Starshooter. The influence of the punk idiom in France is considered to have led to the emergence of *le rock française*, represented by bands like Téléphone, Trust, Starshooter, and Indochine. The work of these bands is very close to anglo-american hard rock, heavy metal and punk, and, in Looseley’s words, ‘it is difficult to grasp what makes it “French” other than the use of the French language.’<sup>11</sup> Looseley’s observation is more than relevant to our purposes here since, as will be discussed later, when it comes to the manifestations

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<sup>9</sup> Looseley (2), p.47

<sup>10</sup> Ibid

<sup>11</sup> Looseley (1), p.35

of punk in these five countries, it is in the content that its particular characteristics are to be found, and not in the musical treatment as such.

Punk entered West Germany also during the early years of its British incarnation, and its influence led to the formation of bands like PVC, and Big Balls and the Great White Idiot who closely followed the British punk scene, and more commonly used lyrics in English. As is to be seen later in this chapter, and although not a notable phenomenon during its first years, West German punk eventually led to the assimilation of rock idioms in the country. On the contrary, the existence of punk rock in East Germany is a matter that calls for further consideration. As Ryback suggests, punk rock made its appearance in East Germany somewhat late (in 1980) and was followed by the appearance of bands throughout the country that adopted provocative names (Itch, Leftovers, Sewage and Shut Up) and started playing a punk-influenced musical style fuelled with energy and anger.<sup>12</sup> At the time the punk idiom made its appearance in East Germany, as Ryback points out, the youth community of the GDR was experiencing feelings of ‘claustrophobia’, due to the fact that they were now more than ever confined within the country’s borders. More specifically, in addition to not being permitted to cross the border to the West, the border to Poland was also closed after 1980, while travel to Hungary was also impossible from this point onwards because of the high prices that were now applied in the country as a result of the economic reforms it was going through. All these made it impossible for the East German youth community to travel, and the feelings of isolation and confinement were more intense than ever.<sup>13</sup> East German punk bands like Zebra expressed these sentiments. (‘I sit at home/there’s not much going on in this hole/I ask myself/what the hell do other people do?’).

East German youth communities all over the country engaged widely with punk music, despite the opposition of the state to this kind of music. It was not only its simplicity that allowed people that were not musically trained to play this music, but its aggressive and offensive style served to express the negative feelings of the youth culture. Indeed, punk rock in the GDR remained highly political, an appropriate medium for the expression of all the anger and frustration that this generation experienced. As

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<sup>12</sup> Ryback, p.205

<sup>13</sup> Ibid

expected, punk music attracted strict opposition from the East German state as soon as it was noticed by the authorities. Indeed, as Ryback has argued, the state realized the potential danger of the punk rock scene soon after its appearance in the country and, in January 1981, the Communist Youth Organization was given the task of eliminating the punk movement.<sup>14</sup> It goes without saying that one of the punk features that was considered unsuitable for East Germany was the fashion styles to which it had given rise. According to Smith, East German punks, being strictly criticized for their inappropriate appearance, were often fined or even arrested. The irony, as Smith goes on to suggest, lies in the fact that during this period a skinhead and neo-Nazi culture also began developing in the country: members of this culture followed the style of appearance that was approved by the state (their style being aligned with that of the ‘youth policing’ groups, of which many were also members), as a means to ‘subvert the meaning of the state’.<sup>15</sup> This is just an example of how the East German state was very often politicizing and regulating youth styles because of their Western origins, and, in doing so, missed the opportunity to direct its attention to communities that were in fact far more dangerous for the state. As Shingler puts it, ‘[a]s with jazz, rock’n’roll and beat music fans in the 1950s and 1960s, punks were subjected to a campaign of repression from 1981 onwards, involving the usual Stasi tactics of arrests, interrogations and prison sentences’.<sup>16</sup> The Stasi banned numerous punk bands that were considered hostile to the state: for example, as Shingler informs us, members of the punk band Namenlos were ‘arrested and sentenced to between 12 and 18 months in prison for “disparaging” the state’ in August 1983.<sup>17</sup> Apart from its overt regulation, the East German state applied other, more indirect, tactics against punk in order to be able to regulate the movement from ‘inside’: more specifically, the Stasi recruited many members of the East German punk movement, who were given the task to ‘report on other punks’ and give information about them and their actions.<sup>18</sup> Nonetheless, the East German punk movement, although remaining in the

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid

<sup>15</sup> Smith, p.292

<sup>16</sup> Shingler

<sup>17</sup> Ibid

<sup>18</sup> Ibid

underground until the late 1980s,<sup>19</sup> was not suppressed, and continued to have a central position in the life of the state. In Goodboy, Tate and Wallace's words,

[T]he alternative punk culture which made its appearance in the late 1970s...was accompanied in the 1980s by a dramatic increase in the number of amateur rock and pop groups and discos across the GDR. Once officially rejected and suppressed as a particularly pernicious and corrupting Western influence, such popular music continued to face obstacles from officialdom but nevertheless became, as in the West, a factor of increasing importance in the daily lives of young people.<sup>20</sup>

In Greece the punk movement appeared in 1979, but started being more widely engaged with in 1981. During this period, the new government in Greece (appointed in 1981), gave greater freedom to people, further facilitated economic development, and the increase in consumerism. From 1981 onwards Greek punk bands like 4elses, No Name, and later Grover, and Trypes emerged, and the Greek punk phenomenon kept on growing until it eventually reached its peak in 1985. Nevertheless, Greek society, still conservative in nature, had a generally negative attitude towards punks, regarding them as dangerous, violent, and as drug abusers. In addition, the police often went to places where punk subcultures gathered in order to control and regulate the situation. However, as Ntaloukas points out, in contrast to general belief, Greek punk during this period was not a violent movement, and was not particularly orientated towards drug use, although both soft and hard drugs were by now widespread among young Greeks in general. The punk movement in Greece was important in its inclusivity, and more specifically in the way it accepted women as equals (this was the case in all the countries considered here). This is particularly important for Greece, since it remained a largely patriarchal society even up to the beginning of the 1980s, and gender inequality in society was still striking.

Musically Greek punk developed as an imitation of British punk music, although it largely differed in content. Indeed, whereas the musical background was almost identical, Greek punk songs dealt with more personal issues of disillusionment, rather than engaging with the expression of general feelings of discontent. It was with the influence of the punk idiom that Greek rock bands (like Mousikes Taksiairchies, and

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<sup>19</sup> Shingler: As Shingler mentions, East German punk remained in the underground until the late 1980s, with punk concerts taking place in garages, and punk music being disseminated via home-made cassettes.

<sup>20</sup> Goodboy, Tate and Wallace, pp.200-201

Spyridoula, among others) would eventually turn away from the tendency to copy British rock in favour of the creation of a more personal idiom.

Punk reached Italy soon after the mid-1970s and was immediately taken up by Italian bands. One of the first bands to engage with punk, Skiantos with Roberto ‘Freak’ Antoni as a leader, is considered to have made a significant contribution to Italian rock culture as a whole, not least by influencing the emergence of the *rock demenziale* (zany rock) movement.<sup>21</sup> Apart from influencing the musicians, punk also became popular with the Italian audiences, as is to be seen in their attendance at concerts of foreign punk-related artists: Patti Smith’s 1979 concert in Florence before an audience of 70,000 defined what Brogioni sees as one of the most important rock moments in Italy.<sup>22</sup> However, as Fiori suggests, it was not easy to be punk in Italy, partly because the products required for the creation of the punk image were not easy to find in the country. Additionally, as he points out, punk was a style that came to represent the British youth culture that was experiencing unemployment but was, however, receiving benefits from the British government. Thus, as Fiori suggests, punk was rooted in a different mentality than the one that surrounded the Italian unemployed youth culture which did not receive any kind of similar benefit.<sup>23</sup> This leads to the conclusion that punk music was received and experienced differently in Italy than in Britain. However, it also needs to be acknowledged that this is, of course, the case with the majority of musical styles, and also applies to all the countries looked at here.

Nevertheless, in the case of punk this takes a more obvious course. Indeed, the ways in which French, German, Greek, and Italian youth cultures engaged with punk music differed fundamentally from the ways in which their youth cultures had previously engaged with the rock idioms both of the ‘reception’ and ‘imitation’ periods discussed earlier, as well as the versions of rock we saw developing in the previous chapter. More specifically, it has been particularly stressed that in strictly musical terms punk movements in all the countries under consideration here took an approach characterized by direct imitation: they copied the musical style, used the same instrumentation, and the

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<sup>21</sup> Prato (2005), p.227

<sup>22</sup> Simone Brogioni, ‘Firenze (Florence)’ in the *Continuum Encyclopedia of Popular Music of the World*, v.VII: Europe, Shepherd, John, Horn, David, and Laign, Dave (eds.), (London: Continuum, 2005), p.240

<sup>23</sup> Fiori (1984), p.267

same approach to performance found in British punk. In one sense one could see punk as a step backwards, instead of a further development for the rock cultures of these countries. However, I take a different position on this. Indeed, although the music sounded identical, thematically the lyrics used in the 'local' versions of punk differed significantly, and revealed the political and social concerns of the youth communities of the time in each of these countries. As a musical style, punk allowed for easy access by performers who were not necessarily musically 'trained' – it was simple, fast, loud, provocative, like a new version of rock'n'roll that entered these countries more than twenty years after the original rock'n'roll and reached new generations of youth cultures who were more prepared to engage actively with these musical idioms.

The reasons these youth cultures were ready to engage with any particular musical idiom are to be found in the development of rock music within their national borders. First, underground, alternative music circuits had developed in each of the countries considered here (something specifically seen in the previous chapter), and it was therefore easier for punk to be communicated. Second, the fact that these youth cultures, in spite of having by now a variety of idiosyncratic rock styles to engage with, turned to punk music is very important in these terms, because through it they were able to express feelings that were particular to them and the context in which they found themselves. I take the position that these youth cultures *chose* to copy the music of British punk because they considered it an appropriate idiom through which to express their own feelings and anxieties in a way that resembled the approach of the singer-songwriters we considered in the previous chapter, but while retaining something of the amateur, and youthful character of earlier forms of rock.<sup>24</sup>

Punk music soon came to be blended with other rock styles (including the kind of developments seen in the previous chapter), as well as with national popular music idioms, and it went on to create an explosion of 'new wave' movements in each of the countries considered here that in most cases came to embody the ongoing process of assimilation of rock idioms. It is of particular relevance here to note that the transformation of 'punk' into 'new wave' came about partly because of its neutralization,

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<sup>24</sup> Although it is debatable whether punk can be considered a rock style or a separate genre, it carries many of the fundamental characteristics of the early styles of anglo-american rock - simplicity, rebelliousness, and a lack of professionalism.

and partly because of its acceptance by the mainstream music industries and broadcasting systems. Indeed, due to its offensive nature, punk had previously often been oppressed and censored, something that had a notable effect on how it was perceived and distributed. This is only one example of how policies affect the course of popular music styles in any particular country, something discussed in Chapter 2. However, it is worth taking this observation a little further through applying it to the existence of rock idioms in these countries through a brief discussion of the ways in which the stance that each nation-state chose to take towards rock (and popular music in general) affected the process of assimilation of rock idioms in Britain, France, Germany, Greece, and Italy.

### **The effect of national policies and institutions**

As has already been discussed in the Chapter 2, popular music in any particular country is subjected to the influence of the institutions of the nation-state and the policies surrounding both the production of music as well as its distribution through a country's broadcasting systems. As Wallis and Malm have put it, '[t]he actions and decisions of sovereign states on their own or together with other states affect both musical sub-cultures and the activities of the music industry. In this respect the independent country is an entity'.<sup>25</sup> Indeed, though Wallis and Malm, as Street has also observed, acknowledge the variations of different localities, they also note how these cannot be separated altogether from the national.<sup>26</sup> I shall now turn to consider the importance of the nation-state in the assimilation of rock elements. In order to do so, I shall give a brief account of the position of British, French, German, Greek and Italian nation-states towards their popular musics in general, and rock idioms in particular for the whole period this dissertation is dealing with (1955-1985). Although the issue has been touched upon at several points in the previous chapter, the discussion to which I now turn aims to bring these issues together in order to shed further light on the importance of the nation-state for the development of national popular musics, and, consequently, for the process of the assimilation itself.

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<sup>25</sup> Wallis and Malm (1984), p.18

<sup>26</sup> John Street, 'Local differences? Popular music and the local state' in *Popular Music*, 12/1 (1993), p.53

### *Importance of the nation-state*

The effect of the nation-state on cultural production and consumption within its borders is very important, although it is often ignored. Street has argued that:

Copyright laws, trade policy, censorship, education policy, broadcasting regulations, all these things produce a popular culture that profoundly affects what is heard and seen. And this matters: it matters if people cannot enjoy certain films or books or musics because of the way they live through this culture. The political management of popular culture is, therefore, another key theme.<sup>27</sup>

Indeed, the position of the nation-state towards any cultural idiom acts in ways to mark it with certain connotations. For example, we have seen how the strict regulation of rock music by the East German state gave it a revolutionary status. We also saw how the more 'liberal' stance of the West German state in this respect initially resulted in more 'imitative' approaches from West German rock representatives. Relevant observations were made in previous chapters regarding each of the countries with which this dissertation is dealing. However, the effect of the nation-state in these terms becomes more readily obvious at times when governmental policies on cultural idioms change.

This is particularly evident in the case of France, where the further legitimization of rock music can be seen to be directly connected with changes in national policies towards the music. According to Teillet, rock music was 'rejected or ignored by those in charge of public sector culture that became institutionalized at about the same time as the French rockers appeared (1959)': Teillet goes on to add that, despite this rejection, rock music was nevertheless included within the cultural policy sector.<sup>28</sup> This on its own shows how rock music in France was recognized as an idiom that needed to be under official government policies from the beginning, but was not seen as an idiom that could be included under the notion of a public sector culture. As has been mentioned in previous chapters, the French state, being characterized by what Cloonan sees as a 'promotional' attitude in regard to popular music, had imposed quotas for securing the broadcasting of songs that were mainly in the French language, and for ensuring the

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<sup>27</sup> Street (1997), p.6

<sup>28</sup> Philippe Teillet, 'Rock and culture in France: Ways, processes and conditions of integration' in *Popular Music in France from Chanson to Techno*, Dauncey, Hugh and Cannon, Steve (eds.), (Hants: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2003), p.190



promotion of new French talent. In doing so, Cloonan suggests, it aimed to secure the prominence of its own popular music productions in what was being broadcast.<sup>29</sup> The French nation-state, together with other states that adopt a 'promotional' attitude in this respect, are, according to Cloonan, 'likely to be concerned about being dominated by Anglo-American music and will try to devise policies, such as radio quotas and promotion of domestic music to combat this'.<sup>30</sup> Additionally, the French nation-state was not only strictly regulating its broadcasting systems, but, at the same time, was directly opposed to the possibility of having, in Hare's words, an 'independent commercial sector providing competition to the public service tradition'.<sup>31</sup>

Furthermore, the attitude of specific politicians toward cultural production and consumption had also been particularly important at various stages. For instance, André Maulraux, the first Minister of Culture, appointed during de Gaulle's presidency, made extended efforts during the 1960s to bring high culture closer to the masses.<sup>32</sup> However, during that same period (as was seen in Chapter 4 when 'institutionalization' was discussed), after realizing its commercial potential, the French nation-state supported the production and broadcasting of an institutionalized version of French rock, the *yéyé*. The contradiction between the governmental efforts to democratize high culture on the one hand and the support and promotion of French responses to rock because of its commercial potential are the two poles between which the French nation-state oscillated for about twenty five years after the first appearance of rock'n'roll in the country. As Warne argues (drawing on Looseley), French cultural policy before the 1980s moved between the 'goals of promoting democratization of culture and professional creation on the one hand, and cultural development and amateur creativity on the other'.<sup>33</sup> The situation changed in 1981, with the election of François Mitterand and the Socialist Party, and the appointment of Jack Lang as the new Minister of Culture. With the changes that Lang applied in cultural life popular music in France began to be treated both as a symbol of modernity and also as a way to attract attention from the media. The new government legitimized popular music through its actions – as Loosely has pointed out, it legalized

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<sup>29</sup> Cloonan (1999), p.195

<sup>30</sup> Ibid, p.204

<sup>31</sup> Hare, p.57

<sup>32</sup> Tinker, p.96

<sup>33</sup> Warne, 2006, p.59

private radio, while it supported and promoted events such as rock concerts.<sup>34</sup> Needless to say, this gave rock music greater visibility, and made possible its full integration within the French popular music scene.

Although the quotas and censorship applied by the French nation-state might have been ones that affected French popular music in more indirect ways, their effect was important for the development of French rock, as is always the case when any nation-state applies policies in relation to cultural idioms. Cloonan has put it as follows: '[u]nderpinning the state will be, in Weber's famous dictum, the monopoly of legitimate violence over a given territory.[...]' he then goes on to add that it is this monopoly that 'acts as the ultimate guarantor' of the policies that can affect popular music.<sup>35</sup> This, of course, is made more obvious in the case of states that have an 'authoritarian' character, like East Germany. Cloonan calls 'authoritarian' states that have a 'generally strict control of recording, a licensing system for live musicians and strict control of imports', not only in terms of music, but of any cultural product.<sup>36</sup> The effect of the East German state as far as rock music is concerned has been discussed in some detail elsewhere in this dissertation; since its effect on East German rock was significant and straightforward, there is no need to elaborate on it further at this point. On the other side of the wall the situation was quite the contrary. As we have already seen, the West German state appears to have had a notably liberal stance towards popular music. Indeed, it followed the liberal position the state held towards American cultural idioms in general and came about as a result of the international political situation. As Poiger explains: '[...] the rejection of American music was part of efforts to promote this "Christian West". This vision, which dominated West German cultural politics in the first half of the 1950s, was increasingly pushed aside by a different, cold war liberal understanding of culture and consumption'.<sup>37</sup> However, as seen in previous chapters, whereas on the one hand the liberal stance of the West German state regarding the engagement of youth audiences with rock idioms allowed their broad dissemination in the country, it did restrict their creative use by West German artists on the other. This paradox is made more clearly evident from the fact that

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<sup>34</sup> Loosely (2), pp.131-149

<sup>35</sup> Cloonan (1999), p.193

<sup>36</sup> Ibid, p.203

<sup>37</sup> Poiger (2),p.134

the first instances of a more idiosyncratic and creative West German rock music began taking place after the late 1960s, when the use of rock music in combination with the German language came to express both political opposition to the West German state, as well as strong anti-American sentiments. The liberal stance of the West German state regarding popular culture in general is also evident in the way in which cultural production and broadcasting systems were organized in the country from the early post-WWII years. More specifically, West German broadcasting systems were not centrally controlled; instead, the country was characterized by media systems that were decentralized, and thus localized. From this perspective one could suggest that West German rock was not affected notably by the position of West German state. One needs to consider the numerous other ways in which a nation-state, West German included, can affect popular music production and consumption (copyright laws, censorship, taxes, etc.) in order to realize that the situation is more complex. However, there is no doubt that the production and consumption of music that was african-american and rock-influenced was easier in West Germany, something that affected the assimilation of these idioms both positively as well as negatively. The different situations on the two sides of the Berlin Wall, and the distinct version of rock that emerged in each (despite the fact that their populations were from the same 'nation', and shared the same political and cultural history), reveals very clearly how the regulations of any nation-state can direct, and divert, the course of any particular popular musical idiom within its legitimate borders.

Unlike the situation in the two German states, the regulation of imported rock music by the nation-states is not always to be seen in relation to the position taken towards the USA (although, as seen in Chapter 3, this was sometimes the case) and the stance towards American culture, but rather in relation to a particularly protective stance towards its own culture. As Cloonan, drawing on Pickering and Shuker, writes: '[t]he desire to express allegiance to domestic products and artists is not *necessarily* a reactionary one'.<sup>38</sup> He goes on: '[t]o admit that some forms of popular music need Nation-State assistance can be to defy the market rather than to promote xenophobia'.<sup>39</sup> This had been the case in France, as we saw earlier, and it had also been the case in Italy,

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<sup>38</sup> Cloonan (1999), p.204

<sup>39</sup> Ibid

where the conservatism of the government and the lack of public funding for music created restrictions for the development of rock. In Greece, on the other hand, it was the music industry that determined the treatment of rock music, and it was only during the years of the military junta (1967-74) that the effects that state censorship can have on the popular music of the country were realized. Again, these were discussed broadly in Chapter 5 and do not need repetition here. However, the case of Greece is in itself very interesting in these terms, since it shows the contradiction between a nation-state that is liberal, and a nation-state that is authoritarian. Observation of the musical life of the country during these different phases reveals how much central policy means for the way music is produced, consumed, and interpreted in the same country by the same musicians and audiences but in different political contexts.

Finally, Britain, more so than Greece in the years out of the military junta, left the development of popular music to the music industry, being a paradigmatic case of what Cloonan defines a *benign state* in these terms. Britain, although it always had censorship and broadcasting laws, does not have popular music high on its cultural agenda, and ‘tend[s] to regard the state’s role as being to referee between competing business interests rather than controlling or promoting popular music’.<sup>40</sup> This is not to suggest that British censorship of popular music has not been of significance,<sup>41</sup> but rather that the British state was more interested in ‘let[ting] the music industry go about its daily business uninterrupted and to reap the taxes that industry success brings’.<sup>42</sup> Bearing this in mind, it might not be an exaggeration to suggest that the early assimilation of rock’n’roll in Britain, as well as the proliferation of rock music styles that manifested in the country thereafter, came as the result of the competing interests of a British record industry not closely controlled by the nation-state.

Nonetheless, one should not ignore the fact that nation-states are part of a wider system of international affairs, existence within which defines much of their actions and policies, as well as the effects they have on and the responses they attract from the population within their borders. Although on the one hand this is directly relevant to the issue of globalization that has been discussed in Chapter 2, on the other hand it serves to

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid

<sup>41</sup> See Cloonan (1996)

<sup>42</sup> Cloonan (1999), p.204

reveal the particularities of each nation-state more clearly, something specifically reflected in the way each nation-state influenced the process of assimilation of rock music within its borders. This is because, as I hope has become evident in the course of the preceding chapters, social, political, and policy factors, as well as the ‘manipulations’ of the media, all vary from country to country and are what determine the process of assimilation in each national context. This position hovers throughout this dissertation, and has been spelled out in particular cases where I have argued that the influence of the state on the development and assimilation of rock’n’roll idioms has been most explicit.

However, I am by no means suggesting here that the assimilation of rock idioms is determined largely by the nation-state. On the contrary, I have claimed at various points in this dissertation that I see the assimilation of rock musical idioms as resulting from the tension between top-down and bottom-up, and it is in this ‘force-field’ that I argue that the sense of ‘national identity’ in this music is located. Indeed, the ‘top-down’ treatment of any cultural idiom in any given nation has always to be seen in relation to its existence in the everyday lives<sup>43</sup> of the cultural consumers of the nation in question. It is therefore in the field of tensions between these two positions that we should observe and understand its ‘assimilation’. One way to see this would be to turn our attention to the ways in which the media act as intermediaries between the nation-state and the audience. As Street points out, factors that affect ‘national’ popular musics are the music industries, the broadcasting systems, and what he calls the ‘pop process’. In his words: ‘[i]n organizing the production of music these agencies act as filters, selecting out artists and trends; in the consumption of music, they work to create audiences and markets’.<sup>44</sup> On the one hand, these ‘filters’ cannot operate independently from the nation-state, as they are affected by censorship, copyright laws, quotas, market policies, and other governmental regulations. On the other hand, in spite of their dependence on the nation-state, these agents do determine in large extent what is being promoted in the country, and they therefore do affect the development of national popular musics, at least in terms

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<sup>43</sup> Edensor, whose critique of the key authors on nationalism and national identity (Ernest Gellner, Eric Hobsbawm, Benedict Anderson, Anthony Smith, John Hutchinson) is based on the view that ‘whilst they implicitly assert its importance, they marshal extremely reductive notions about culture’, highlights the importance of the necessity to turn our attention to how national identities (parts of which are the cultural idioms in the country) operate in the everyday context. (Tim Edensor, *National Identity, Popular Culture and Everyday Life* (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2002), p.12).

<sup>44</sup> Street (1993), p.52

of their manifestation within the mainstream. The flip side of the coin is that neither the nation-state, nor the media can determine the ways in which these broadcasts are received and interpreted by audiences. Furthermore, it should always be borne in mind that, regardless of the extent to which the ‘gatekeepers’ decide which material is going to be broadcast, the ‘audience’ still has many options between media products to choose from. Thus there still exists a significant authority on the part of the receiver when it comes to her choice in cultural consumption. As Thomson puts it:

[t]he appropriation of media products is always a localized phenomenon, in the sense that it always involves specific individuals who are situated in particular socio-historical contexts, and who draw on the resources available to them in order to make sense of media messages and incorporate them into their lives. And messages are often transformed in the process of appropriation as individuals adapt them to the contexts of everyday life.<sup>45</sup>

We shall now turn to discuss the evidence of assimilation with regard to the rise of British, French, German, Greek, and Italian *rock* scenes. These *rock* scenes resulted from the processes described previously in this study, and were affected both by the actions of the nation-states and the mainstream industries, as well as by the creative activities of the rock musicians and audiences, whether or not part of the underground. At various points in this dissertation I have addressed the contradiction between top-down and bottom-up treatments of rock idioms in the process of rock music assimilation in each of the countries under discussion here, in an effort to underline that it is in the release of the tension created from this dialectic that the process of assimilation – the making of an idiom one’s own – in its most creative and important form is to be observed.

### **Assimilation**

As we have seen in previous chapters, rock musical idioms had been audible in all the countries we are looking at from the time of its emergence as the significant youth culture of the years we are considering in this chapter, that is, roughly from the late-1970s to the late 1980s. The previous discussion shows that these musical idioms have now entered what is often described as the ‘collective memory’ of these nations. The account of the rock styles that contributed significantly to the process of assimilation as these were

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<sup>45</sup> Thompson (1995), p.174

presented so far in Part III (progressive rock, singer-songwriters, and punk), in combination with the knowledge that other manifestations of rock also existed at the same time, suggests that the situation concerning the existence of rock in these countries ceased to be as straightforward after the ‘imitation period’. This is partly due to the proliferation of rock musical styles, as well as the significantly increasing use of rock idioms in the creation of songs in other musical styles. However, during the period discussed here, Britain, France, Germany, Greece, and Italy developed rock styles that were particularly idiosyncratic and it is these that I discuss below as representing their *national rock scenes*.

### *Britain*

I shall begin this discussion with the case of Britain, although I acknowledge that its inclusion here can be seen as debatable due to the position of Britain as one of the ‘exporters’ of popular music, and as a harbinger of the developments that came to take place in the *international* rock scene. It has been argued in Chapter 4 that Britain had already assimilated the rock idioms in the early 1960s, something evident in the work of the British Invasion bands. I nevertheless suggest that it is in the years discussed in this chapter, from the late-1970s onwards, that a full assimilation of rock idioms has also occurred in Britain. I consider this assimilation, despite all the shared characteristics and the musical interchange with American popular music, to carry nonetheless a *national* character not so much for spelling out its ‘Britishness’, but more because it brings the previous development of British rock-influenced popular music to the point where it is at home and at ease with itself and with every other popular music style in the country. I am referring here to the punk-influenced new wave that became prominent in the late 1970s, both in Britain as well as in the USA. New wave made an obvious turn away from the complexities of the progressive rock style, and followed the path of punk in its insistence on simplicity. As a musical style, new wave was characterized by songs that were simple in form, namely of the verse-refrain format, and that were of a notably shorter length than the musical endeavours of the prominent rock styles of the time, seldom exceeding four minutes. It did not feature any extended virtuosic solos, and kept the harmonic

progressions, as well as the instrumentation, simple.<sup>46</sup> As has been mentioned above, this was a musical style that developed simultaneously in Britain and the USA, but it is often considered to have been more influential in its British version, so much so that some of the British new wave acts became part of what is considered by many to be 'The Second British Invasion' of the USA in the 1980s.

Notwithstanding their affinities with punk music, British new wave of the time often took a direction that was more pop/dance-orientated, and explored the use of technological equipment and synthesizers. Unlike punk, new wave introduced songs that were more 'polished' in terms of studio production, and that featured more complex treatment musically, as well as in terms of the content of lyrics. Indeed, while in the second half of the 1970s the term 'new wave' was used to describe punk-orientated, and post-punk musicians that appeared to be less 'threatening' than the representatives of the first punk wave, it later went on to become an umbrella term that included such diversity of musical styles as pub rock (Eddie and the Hot Rods, Ian Dury), singer-songwriters (Elvis Costello, Graham Parker), 'power pop' (The Motors, The Records, The Jam), ska (The Specials, Madness), post-punk (Siouxsie and the Banshees, Joy Division, The Cure), New Romantics (Duran Duran), synthpop (Depeche Mode, New Order, The Human League) and African-American-influenced fusions (Adam and the Ants, Bow Wow Wow). As Lopes puts it, new wave is thought to be 'recombining previous styles into new meanings and styles of performance'.<sup>47</sup> The diversity encountered within the British new wave as a 'genre' reflects the general condition of the popular music at the turn of the 1980s. Britain, one of the world centres of popular music, exhibits its affinities with the rock scene post-assimilation by, in fact, breaking its close ties with it, and by creating styles of music that directly or indirectly draw heavily on the rock idiom in a variety of unexpected ways.

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<sup>46</sup> John Covach, 'Progressive rock, "Close to the edge" and the boundaries of style' in *Understanding Rock: Essays in Musical Analysis*, John Covach and Graeme M. Boone (eds.), (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), p.5

<sup>47</sup> Paul D. Lopes, 'Innovation and diversity in the popular music industry, 1969-1990' in *American Sociological Review*, 57/1 (February 1992), p.65



## France

As was mentioned earlier in this chapter, it was with the influence of punk that the development of the French rock scene came closer to full assimilation, with the emergence of what Looseley sees as the real ‘flowering of punk’.<sup>48</sup> Nonetheless, this development did not take place in the years that immediately followed the appearance of punk in the country, but occurred around the mid-1980s with the emergence of ‘alternative rock’, or, as is known in France, *le rock alternatif*, which is what I see here as the French national rock scene.<sup>49</sup> In Looseley’s words, ‘[i]t is at this moment that one can begin to talk of a true implanting of pop, of a musical graft which has taken and finally flowered in foreign soil.’<sup>50</sup> In *le rock alternatif*, Looseley argues, rock idioms were mixed with French popular music characteristics in different ways, such as with the use of the ‘rediscovered accordion’, or with ‘sounds from elsewhere in the Francophone world’,<sup>51</sup> as in the work of bands like Les Rita Mitsouko, Les Garçons Bouchers, Les Nègresses Vertes, La Mano Negra, Pigalle, and Têtes Raides among other exemplifies.

Although *rock alternatif* became the main popular music style in France in the second half of the 1980s, and was incorporated into the mainstream music industries and broadcasting systems, it was its development in underground off-mainstream networks that determined to large extent its importance as the ‘flowering’ of the French rock scene. As Lebrun puts it: ‘[a]s a post-punk genre, *rock alternatif* developed an exclusive relationship with local independent labels, and accumulated a series of “authentic” values based on its combination of the virtues of *chanson* (the foregrounding of poetic and political lyrics), of rock (energy, anger), and of a renewed sense of ethics in its challenging of international economic pressures’.<sup>52</sup> From this perspective, it can be suggested that with *rock alternatif* the French rock scene was located at the centre of its musical inheritance (the *chanson* tradition on the one hand and the rock idioms on the other). At the same time, this musical approach was initially explored in combination with the ideology that surrounded punk, namely the DIY ethic and the rejection of the

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<sup>48</sup> Looseley (2), p.47

<sup>49</sup> Ibid

<sup>50</sup> Ibid

<sup>51</sup> Looseley (1), p.36

<sup>52</sup> Barbara Lebrun, *Protest Music in France: Production, Identity and Performance* (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing, 2009), p.15

commercial nature of the networks of production and distribution that characterized mainstream pop. Indeed, such an approach became possible due to changes in the production of French music that appeared from the mid-1970s onwards with the emergence of punk. In Looseley's words: '[a] number of small, informally run companies sprang up enabling non-mainstream bands to avoid the interference and dispossession involved in working for the majors.'<sup>53</sup> It can be argued, therefore, that *rock alternatif* came from the 'culmination' of the previous musical explorations of punk that led to the creation of songs that intuitively combined rock idioms and French popular music traditions with the freedom of expression allowed by dissociation from the mainstream music industries. Detachment from the mainstream music industries also freed rock music in France from its perception as a mere consumerist product and gave it the ability to be used as an expressive medium both for ideas and emotions, and also for political attitudes.

Indeed, similar arguments had been made regarding progressive rock and the work of singer-songwriters as seen in the previous chapter. However, the difference lies in the fact that it was after the influence of punk that this attitude was applied intuitively in the production of songs that did not make any obvious efforts to be associated with 'serious' culture (either musical or literary), and were instead orientated towards the original character of rock'n'roll (shorter songs, dance rhythms, and simple directness). It can be argued that at this point rock idioms became fundamentally liberated, and it was no longer necessary to justify and camouflage their use by combining them with more 'serious' cultural idioms in order to make them acceptable. Drott puts it as follows:

Many genres that had once seemed alien to French audiences had, over time, become thoroughly assimilated into the nation's cultural life. Such was the case with French rock. The advent of punk in the late 1970s and the *alternative* movement a few years later was crucial to this process of integration. The DIY aesthetic these movements espoused liberated rock musicians and fans from the inferiority complex that had haunted them just a few years before.<sup>54</sup>

The explosion of *rock alternatif* in France can therefore be seen as the legitimization of rock styles that allowed more democratic involvement by 'untrained' musicians, and the

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<sup>53</sup> Looseley (2), p.47

<sup>54</sup> Drott, p.272

support of the underground networks for these musical styles; taken together, this represents the bottom-up development of French rock music in these terms. However, top-down changes with regard to popular music in the country that took place in the early 1980s also contributed to the development of *le rock alternatif*, both in terms of production as well as in terms of its eventual popularity with French audiences. These are directly connected with the changes in the nation-state approach towards popular music that were discussed earlier in this chapter, seen by Lebrun in terms of their effect on the rise of *rock alternatif*. More specifically, she sees the decentralization of music production and the ability given to local authorities to make decisions concerning the funding and support of culture within their areas arising from this decentralization, as important factors for the emergence and growth of different creative versions of rock music in France.<sup>55</sup> Indeed, Lebrun sees local infrastructures and growing underground networks as important factors for the visibility and success of various rock bands that operated locally, such as Carte de Sejour (Lyons), Zebda (Toulouse), and Noir Desir (Bordeaux) among others.<sup>56</sup> Indeed, with the support of the local authorities bands from different localities moved from the local to the national level, a connecting network that allowed for a nationally-spread musical idiom.

Further support for this development came from an additional change applied by the nation-state in the early 1980s: the liberation of the airwaves and the legalization of numerous pirate stations which had flourished in the late 1960s and the 1970s. This changed fundamentally the character of radio broadcasting in France, which was previously confined in the monopoly of the state-owned Telediffusion de France, and the reach of the *périphériques* (like Radio Luxembourg and Monte Carlo). These new radio stations that emerged in the early 1980s (*radio libres*) played an important role in exposing and popularizing *rock alternatif*, as well as other musical styles which would never have been played by the official, central broadcasting systems.<sup>57</sup> However, the situation would change in 1984 with the authorisation of commercial and private radio stations by the Socialist Party. From this point onwards, many of the *radio libres* became commercial radio stations, since the owners of radio stations and music producers were

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<sup>55</sup> Lebrun, p.25

<sup>56</sup> Ibid

<sup>57</sup> Ibid, p.26

engaged in constant efforts to increase profits. As a consequence, the situation described above was turned on its head, creating the following paradox: while *radio libres* were becoming increasingly more consumer-orientated they kept on turning away from musical styles that did not fall directly within the ‘mainstream pop style’. At the same time, radio stations that were publicly funded (and which did not have to compete for their financial support) started being increasingly more supportive of musical styles that were considered to be niche and not mainstream, *rock alternatif* included.<sup>58</sup> Nonetheless, by the time this happened *rock alternatif* had already gained prominence within French popular music and it would remain the most important and representative rock idiom in the country well beyond the mid-1980s. Albums like Le Rita Mitsouko’s *The No Comprendo* (1986), Noir Desir’s *Où veux-tu qu’-je regarde* (1987), and Mano Negra’s *Petchanka* (1988) indicate this.

### *Germany*

The full assimilation of rock idioms in West Germany in terms of the rise of a *national rock scene* can be seen occurring in the early 1980s with the emergence of *Neue Deutsche Welle* (German New Wave) which, like the French *rock alternatif* owes much to the influence of punk. *Neue Deutsche Welle* was heralded in many respects in the work of two important rock musicians during the previous decade: Udo Lindenberg, who from the early 1970s re-introduced German lyrics into the German rock scene (something that was thereafter followed by the vast majority of West German rock musicians), and Nina Hagen who, after her departure from East Germany in 1976, became one of the most popular representatives of rock music, as well as one of the major punk pioneers in West Germany. The representatives of the *Neue Deutsche Welle* followed Lindenberg, Hagen and other rock musicians of the previous decade in the use of lyrics in their native language and, as Larkey puts it, they ‘continued to exploit the particular rhythmic and prosodic qualities of the German language to convey humorous, ironic, yet socially critical messages, all of which contributed to a broad rejuvenation of German popular songs in the 1980s and subsequent decades’.<sup>59</sup> Indeed, the influence of *Neue Deutsche*

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<sup>58</sup> Ibid

<sup>59</sup> Larkey (2000), p.5

*Welle* on the subsequent development of German popular music was notable, in spite of the fact that the style itself was short-lived due to its extensive ‘manipulation’ by the mainstream music industry after its commercial potential was recognized. According to Adelt, the heyday of *Neue Deutsche Welle* was in the years between 1982 and 1985, following (or rather replacing) *Krautrock* as the dominant popular music style in Germany.<sup>60</sup> Songs like Die Krupps’ ‘Stahlewerksymphonie’ (1981), Einsturzende Neubauten’s ‘Kollapse’ (1981), Nina Hagen’s ‘Nunsexmonkrock’ (1982) and Liliput’s ‘Liliput’ (1982) are examples of the West German *Neue Deutsche Welle*.

Burns and van der Will, who use the term *Neue Deutsche Welle* interchangeably with *polit-Rock*, suggest that it was a musical style clearly affected by the political situation in West Germany, something they see as evident in the underground work of bands like Katapult and Abwärts, as well as in the work of mainstream rock artists like Udo Lindenberg (‘Datenbank’) and the band Ideal.<sup>61</sup> The radical character of *Neue Deutsche Welle* derives from the influence of the rebellious and provocative character of punk. In Burns and van der Will’s words:

With its preference for crude amplification and for the basic instrument constellation of bass, guitar, and drums punk cocked a snook at mainstream rock and its constant striving for technical sophistication; while the raucous vocals and militant posturing adopted by bands like Ätztuttsis, Tote Hosen, S.Y.P.H., and the Nina Hagen Band were clearly designed to be as provocative as possible. If the basic gesture of punk was oppositional, then it was only logical that its scream of defiance should be uttered in German.<sup>62</sup>

Here we see the development of *Neue Deutsche Welle* resembling the development of *rock alternatif* in France: the turn away from the complexities of previous rock styles, the rejection of the mainstream music industries, and the intuitive merging of international rock idioms with national characteristics (the German language) in the expression of serious political sentiments. Nevertheless, as Burns and van der Will go on to suggest, the rise of this particularly idiosyncratic German rock style can also be seen as the result of the lack of an equivalent movement in the United States during this period. Indeed, it was the case that West German rock musicians often closely followed the trends of the

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<sup>60</sup> Adelt (2012), p.5

<sup>61</sup> Burns and van der Will, p.282

<sup>62</sup> Ibid, p.313

American rock scene, mainly because of the liberalized character given to its consumption in West Germany. However, at this particular time, when the German bands turned to the creation of punk-influenced rock idioms that were socially critical, the American rock scene did not have a musical style that could be used as a point of reference, and this is partly what can be seen to have led the German rock musicians to the development of their own distinct rock style. Furthermore, and more importantly, the German bands of the time, following the anti-American sentiments that we saw emerging during the ‘development period’, deliberately distanced themselves from the United States and American culture. From this perspective *die Neue Deutsche Welle* was political, and just as political can also be seen the attitude of the majority of the audience that followed this musical style, politically diverse in its constitution, but politically unified in its position ‘against the system’.<sup>63</sup> As Larkey suggests, the majority of the youth audience of *Neue Deutsche Welle* were ‘fairly well-off German middle-class’, something that could suggest that this music was developed out of the boredom of young people whose financial needs were covered by their parents, but who were at the same time dissatisfied with the situation in their country.<sup>64</sup> Indeed, the majority of NDW songs express feelings of disillusionment and insecurity that can be seen as a response to the utopian political and social goals expressed in the counterculture and the student movement during the previous period (1967-1976).<sup>65</sup>

The importance of the use of German lyrics in these terms is obvious, and it was indeed one of the steps that led West German rock music towards what I call in this dissertation its ‘full assimilation’. As Larkey puts it, ‘Nina Hagen, Udo Lindenberg, and the NDW bands that followed them took the use of German lyrics one step further by bridging the gap between political rock and Schlager’.<sup>66</sup> This is mostly to do with the fact that German popular music could now deal with reality through the use of its own language. Indeed, whereas in *Schlager* what is conjured up is a persistently uncritical and unrealistic image of German-ness, rock music was characterized by a more critical

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<sup>63</sup> Ibid, p.313

<sup>64</sup> Larkey (2002), p.240

<sup>65</sup> Ibid, pp.241-2

<sup>66</sup> Ibid, p.240

approach.<sup>67</sup> With the contribution of Lindenberg, Hagen and other rock artists who used lyrics in the German language during the 1970s, and the further development of this with the emergence of *Neue Deutsche Welle*, German popular music saw the rise of a kind of popular music that was more particular to the German experience in that it often dealt with more realistic issues, like ‘personal feelings or frustrations’ e.g., (‘Eiszeit’ and ‘Monotonie’ by the band Ideal).<sup>68</sup>

In East Germany, on the other hand, things developed differently. For example, the East German bands that we saw becoming accepted during the previous period, supported and promoted by the state like Puhdys, Silly, Karat, and City remained popular in the 1980s as well. These bands wrote their own material, mainly by following the requirements of the state, and were now permitted to travel and perform in the West. However, these bands were distrusted by the fans of punk and dance music who saw them, in Shingler’s words, as ‘established rock musicians [who] were too close to the powerful’.<sup>69</sup> This brought the bands themselves into a difficult position, divided between the requirements of the state, and the expectations of the audience. As Leitner puts it, ‘the leadership [the SED] demanded conformity, the fans opposition’.<sup>70</sup> The incorporation of rock music into the acceptable canon of the East German state met its peak during this period, and was manifested in events like the annual ‘Rock für den Frieden’ (Rock for Peace) festival, which started taking place in 1981. With their performances in ‘Rock für den Frieden’, leading East German rock bands were expected to show their alignment with the state, being parts of what Ryback sees as a rock scene that was ‘flourishing’ on the one hand but ‘obedient’ on the other.<sup>71</sup>

As seen earlier in the chapter, during these years the massive underground engagement of East German youth culture with punk had taken the country by storm. The East German state, having by now realized that punk could not be suppressed despite its efforts, followed the same tactic that was previously applied to rock music and turned its efforts towards transforming punk music and incorporating it within the system as an

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<sup>67</sup> Adelt (2005), p.285

<sup>68</sup> Ibid, p.241

<sup>69</sup> Shingler

<sup>70</sup> Olaf Leitner, ‘Rock music in the GDR: an Epitaph’ in *Rockin’ the state: Rock Music and Politics in Eastern Europe and Russia*, Sabrina Petra Ramet (ed.), (Oxford: Westview Press, 1994), p.27

<sup>71</sup> Ryback, p.204

acceptable idiom aligned with state ideals. Nonetheless, this could not be the case with punk in its original manifestation, and it was rather with the punk-influenced new wave that had by now appeared in East Germany that the punk idiom could find its way into the East German mainstream. In Ryback's words, the East Germans 'tempered their hard line on punk with concessions to new wave'.<sup>72</sup> Paradoxically, whereas new wave musicians were now supported by the state and it could therefore be assumed that they complied with the state's requirements, they still appeared at times to be making oppositional statements in their work. For example, Tamara Danz, a new wave representative who was supported and promoted by the state after the departure of Nina Hagen for West Germany, often introduced an element of social criticism into her songs, despite the fact that she was one of the state-approved rock artists. The band Keks, on the other hand, took this one step further and, as Ryback puts it, 'explored and occasionally found the limits of official tolerance'.<sup>73</sup> Nevertheless, the East German new wave band that managed most successfully to express the mood experienced in East Germany during this period was the highly popular Pankow, formed in 1981. In their songs Pankow dealt with subjects that could even be seen as taboo, like disillusionment, crime, and sexual frustration.<sup>74</sup>

However, despite its incorporation into the state-approved rock canon, the punk-influenced new wave initially manifested in East Germany as a response to the mainstream, 'obedient' rock style that was previously promoted by the East German state. Peter Wicke writes:

The appropriation of the musical elements and ideas of New Wave in the GDR was a spontaneous process, the work of very young musicians, most of them amateurs; it was a reaction by young people to the development of rock music, which had, if anything, been too thoroughly organized, sponsored, administered and fêted by cultural and youth policy. For the more it was organised, the more mediated it became and the more it lost its specific reference to the immediate experience of young people.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> Ibid, p.206

<sup>73</sup> Ibid, p.207

<sup>74</sup> Ibid

<sup>75</sup> Peter Wicke (3), 'Popularity in Music: Some Aspects of a Historical Materialist Theory for Popular Music' in *Popular Music Perspectives: papers from the Second International Conference on Popular Music Studies, Reggio Emilia, September 19-24, 1983*, Horn, David (ed.), (Göteborg, Exeter etc.: IASPM, 1985/distributed by Salisbury: May & May Ltd.), p.50



Indeed, the manipulation, bureaucratization, and professionalization applied to rock music by the East German state led to the dissatisfaction of the majority of the rock audience, in spite of the fact that the state-approved rock bands created 'good rock music'. The punk-influenced, non-professional and DIY character of the new wave contrasted by default with the rock style that had been previously promoted by the state. At the same time, developments relevant to cultural production and consumption in the country during the first half of the 1980s allowed for the growth of this musical phenomenon. Wicke suggests that there was now a sufficient availability of technological means like radios, record players, television sets, cassettes and records that allowed for wide popular music consumption in East Germany.<sup>76</sup> Furthermore, the East German youth culture was now more than ever before very musically active. Wicke reports that around 1985 there had been in East Germany around 5000 amateur and 120 professional rock groups, the latter regularly having their records released by Amiga.<sup>77</sup> However, these bands kept on facing restrictions by the state. In an interview carried out by Maas and Reszel, two members of the band Die Prinzen mentioned that in order for the bands to get airplay, they should only use German lyrics in their songs (it was only in the late 1980s that some exceptions could be seen, like Angelika Weiz).<sup>78</sup>

This section has suggested that it was the punk-influenced *Neue Deutsche Welle* that provided the vehicle towards the full assimilation of rock idioms in both the German states. In West Germany with the combination of this particularly German rock musical style with the freedom of expression of critical sentiments in the German language. In East Germany with the connection of *Neue Deutsche Welle* with the underground network that had already been supporting the punk movement. The particularly interesting point as far as the East German *Neue Deutsche Welle* is concerned is its existence in the country both in its state-approved, tamed, and politically manipulated version, and also as an oppositional idiom in its underground version.

In spite of its broad success and its wide popularity, the prominence of the *Neue Deutsche Welle* did not last many years. According to Adelt, its short life-span can be

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<sup>76</sup> Wicke (2), p.320

<sup>77</sup> Ibid, p.324

<sup>78</sup> Maas and Reszel, p.274

seen as a result of its ‘complete absorption by the pop mainstream’.<sup>79</sup> Nonetheless, as Burns and van der Will also argue, the NDW significantly influenced German popular music in general, something manifested in the subsequent development of rock music in the two German states. For example, West German rock artists like Spliff, Marius Müller-Westernhagen, Wolf Maahn, Herbert Grönemeyer, who became popular during this period, moved to the mainstream via NDW while at the same time continuing to use German language lyrics in their songs, and often introducing obvious anti-establishment elements and social criticism in their lyrics.<sup>80</sup> At the same time the East German rock scene became more active, more creative, and more visible both within the official culture as well as in the underground, as the state was increasingly becoming more tolerant towards it.<sup>81</sup> As Maas and Reszel point out, various styles of rock had emerged in the country by the late 1980s (mainstream rock like Puhdys, Silly and Pankow, hardrock and heavy metal like Berluc and Prinzip, softrock like Karat, jazzrock like Weiz+Fusion, and punk rock like Feeling B and WK13), creating ‘competing fan groups in different musical styles’.<sup>82</sup> The increasingly visible and varied involvement with rock music in terms of music production and consumption in combination with the more tolerant position of the state towards it could therefore suggest that in the years that immediately preceded the fall of the wall rock idioms had become fully assimilated in East Germany as well. However, as Leitner has argued, East German rock cannot be easily said to have created its own distinct version, and, instead of the sound as such, it is in the conditions of production that the specificity of it are to be found. In his words: ‘Production *was* much more influenced by the limitations imposed by the state than by the creativity of the performers’.<sup>83</sup> Although I do not fully agree with Leitner in this respect, it is important to remember that East German rock differed fundamentally from the rest of the countries under consideration here, mainly because of the limitations it was surrounded with, and which determined to a notable extent its subsequent development. The two German

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<sup>79</sup> Adelt, (2005), p291

<sup>80</sup> Burns and van der Will, p.313

<sup>81</sup> Shingler: the increasing tolerance of the East German state towards rock culture can be seen in its eventual acceptance, support, sponsorship, and incorporation of the punk idiom into the mainstream culture (if it complied with the state), as well as with the fact that foreign bands were now performing in East Germany more regularly (1987: David Bowie, The Eurythmics, Genesis, and 1988: Bruce Springsteen)

<sup>82</sup> Maas and Reszel, p.269

<sup>83</sup> Leitner, p.18

scenes merged after the fall of the wall in November 1989, to form a popular music entity that combined the previous experiences of the West German liberal attitude towards American-influenced music, and the East German restricted and controlled engagement with rock music. It was NDW that had been their major point of connection.

### *Greece*

As was the case in all the countries considered here, by the first half of the 1980s rock idioms had gained a prominent position in the Greek popular music scene, and an explosion of several different rock styles now existed in the country, each with its own performers and fans (punk, new wave, jazz rock, hard rock). Aggelikopoulos suggests that this was a period when different styles of songs co-existed in Greece. Apparently, apart from those who maintained a 'pure' rock style, some other artists wrote music that was tied into both the musical tradition of electric rock, as well as the Greek song tradition.<sup>84</sup> Nonetheless, the version of Greek rock that emerged during this time can be seen as evidence of full assimilation beginning to manifest itself with the merging of the idioms of rock, political song, and *laiko*. The full merging of Greek rock with politics occurred around 1978, when artists from both the political and the art song traditions adapted elements of rock (Vassilis Papakonstantinou, Thanos Mikroutsikos), and by making their music less directly political found acceptance in the mainstream musical culture and achieved greater popularity with Greek audiences.<sup>85</sup> The merging of rock, political song, and *laiko* became evident either directly or indirectly in various ways, both in the mainstream as well as in the underground rock scene. For example, in the work of 'marginal rock' representatives, the music was heavily influenced by rock and blues, but the lyrics expressed experiences that were particularly Greek, characterized by pessimism and the use of drugs like heroin, in a heavy climate of personal politics. An important example in these terms was the collaboration between Pavlos Sidiropoulos and the band Spyridoula, particularly with the release of *Flou* in 1979, as well as the work of the band Aprosarmostoi. The combination of rock, political song, and *laiko* is also evident in the work of the singer-songwriter Nikolas Asimos, who was one of the leading rock figures

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<sup>84</sup> Aggelikopoulos, p.30

<sup>85</sup> Mpozinis, p.378

during this period, partly because of his controversial personality. Even more so, the work of Termites brought the three elements of the Greek rock scene closer together, whereas Fatme showed an obvious convergence between rock and *laiko*. Following Fatme, the first album of Charis and Panos Katsimichas, *Zesta Pota*, released in 1985 is considered to be a merging of the three elements by using each equally.<sup>86</sup> The most popular singer-songwriter of the time, and one with lasting popularity, was Vasilis Papakonstantinou, who started as a rock musician, turned towards political rock, and then went on to become one of the most important artists involved in bringing the three main elements of Greek rock together. Other musicians involved in this process were Tsaknis, Kazoulis, and Lathrepivates. Indeed, one of the characteristics of the Greek rock scene of the time is that, although not a single rock music style was the predominant during this period, rock musicians were now capable of combining the elements of Greek music and rock in a way that allowed the emergence of a rock scene that was peculiarly Greek. At the same time the consumption of rock music had increased dramatically, and society had now accepted this musical idiom as an inseparable part of its own music. This is also revealed by the change in the attitude of the nation-state towards the rock idiom itself. Indeed, in 1985 a three-day rock music festival took place at Kallimarmara Panathenaicon Stadium in Athens, sponsored by the Ministry of Culture. As Mpozinis suggests, acceptance by society as well as the support by the nation-state led rock music to lose its 'rebellious' edge, and to it no longer being considered as 'semi-illegal'. Rock was soon to become a commercialized idiom.<sup>87</sup>

### *Italy*

The situation was similar in Italy: the massive phenomenon that dominated the Italian popular music scene during the previous period, *rock progressivo Italiano*, had entirely subsided by the end of the 1970s – as Parentin puts it, it 'seemed to have almost disappeared into a black hole'.<sup>88</sup> Prato points out that in the decades following Italian progressive rock, and most notably in the 1980s and 1990s, heavy rock sounds were not popular either. It appears to be the case that rock music in Italy had rather gone on to

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<sup>86</sup> Mpozinis, p.435

<sup>87</sup> Ibid, p.422-6

<sup>88</sup> Parentin, loc.534

become an idiom that had lost its rebellious edge. Nonetheless, rock musicians like the band Litfiba, Luciano Ligabue, Gianna Nanini, and, most importantly, Vasco Rossi (described by Prato as ‘the man who has best embodied all of rock’s energy and clichés’)<sup>89</sup> remained faithful to their rock influences, and produced an Italian version of rock that combined rock idioms with the melodic sensitivity that had historically characterized Italian music. In the underground as well, the Italian rock scene was characterized by similar processes. Indeed, during this period Italy also had a home-grown new-wave musical style, one that, in Scaruffi’s words, was ‘derivative of British pop/rock and often redolent of the national melodic school. Diaframma’s *Siberia* (1984) and especially Litfiba’s *17 Re* (1986) offered melancholy lyrical psychodrama in the tradition of Italian romantic poetry’.<sup>90</sup> It can then be assumed that the merging of rock with Italian vocal traditions, against the background of Mediterranean music did not only occur for the purposes of commercializing rock further. Instead, it seems to be a ‘natural’, intuitive development that managed to make rock idioms at home with the music of the Italian cultural tradition. Nevertheless, it is a matter of fact that through this transformation the Italian version of rock found its way into the mainstream, and attained a broad acceptance, eventually becoming to a large extent commercialized. Fiori makes the point that:

explosive material until a few years before, rock music in the 1980s seems to have returned to being a commodity like any other, even in Italy. The songs are once again simply songs, the public is the public. The musicians are only interested in their work, and the organizers make their expected profits. If they happen to be a political party, so much the better: they can also profit in terms of public image and perhaps even votes.<sup>91</sup>

However, as much as Fiori’s account might accurately account for the place of rock music in Italy after the ‘disappearance’ of progressive rock, I suggest that the importance of the full assimilation of rock musical idioms in Italy should not be downplayed. From my perspective, Prato’s claim that ‘[r]ock has never fully penetrated Italian culture’,<sup>92</sup> is

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<sup>89</sup> Prato (2005), p.227

<sup>90</sup> Piero Scaruffi, ‘A brief summary of Italian rock music’, <http://www.scaruffi.com/history/italian.html> (accessed 16/09/2013)

<sup>91</sup> Fiori (1984), p.261

<sup>92</sup> Prato (2005), p.226

susceptible to important debate, since the music itself suggests otherwise. Indeed, from this point onwards Italian musicians and audiences, both those who were affiliated with the mainstream music industry, as well as those that represented the underground rock scene, were producing music that was fuelled with african-american, rock, and beat elements (even if these were now considered non-rebellious, and even clichés), and intuitively combining these with the elements that had characterized Italian music previously, most notable among these being the melodic character of the vocal line.

As seen in the above section, it was the merging of rock idioms with elements from their national popular musics that characterizes most notably the full assimilation of rock idioms during this period. Notwithstanding the varying degrees to which this took place in each context, the character that rock took during this period indicates that it is now accepted indisputably by both music producers and consumers and no longer appears as foreign to their sense of ‘national identity’. The fact that it is a musical idiom that is shared with numerous other countries does not diminish its validity as a ‘new’ ‘national musical idiom’ for each of the countries considered here. From this perspective, rock elements are to be seen in terms of what Regev defines as ‘a global cultural component with which contemporary local and national styles of popular music are constructed’.<sup>93</sup> For, as he goes on to add: ‘These [local and national] styles, in their turn, serve as focus for the sense of a different identity that defines such reflexive communities’.<sup>94</sup> Needless to say, in many respects the national styles of rock that we have seen emerging carry many similarities in their sounds. However, this should not lead us to believe that members of each culture do not genuinely conceive them as their ‘own’. This is mainly to be seen in terms of the differences (even the subtlest ones) between rock styles in each country, or even the connotations ascribed to rock music in each country. To turn to Regev again: ‘[...] instead of being disparate, relatively independent musical languages, local styles of music become part of one history, variations of one cultural form – without necessarily losing a sense of difference’.<sup>95</sup> The way I am trying to picture this ‘difference’ here is not one that carries elements of idealism. My purpose has been anything but to suggest that there can be a definitively identifiable distinction between

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<sup>93</sup> Regev (1997), p.138

<sup>94</sup> Ibid

<sup>95</sup> Ibid, p.139

rock-influenced musics in these countries that carries a specific sense of British-ness, French-ness, German-ness, Greek-ness, and Italian-ness (although in many cases there might be). Indeed, one thing that needs to be clarified again at this point is that nowhere in this dissertation do I suggest that the British, French, German, Greek, and Italian rock hybrids are *intentionally* made to sound distinctly British, French, German, Greek, or Italian, but, instead, that this is something that happened intuitively. Had we been supporting the opposite view, we would thus have been suggesting that these musical idioms had in some way a nationalistic character.

Instead, my notion of assimilation and national identity is based on the ability of rock idioms to exist in these countries in such a way and through such a process as to eventually become legitimate parts of their national popular music vernaculars. By being fully assimilated, rock idioms had now become elements able to be used as expressive tools for an ‘imagined community’, despite the fact that they are at the same time shared with the musical vernaculars of other countries as well. We have seen above how the work of rock practitioners in these countries indicates the full assimilation of rock idioms in the countries under consideration with the intuitive merging of rock idioms with elements from national popular musics in the creation of *national rock scenes*. Although this might be seen partly as the capacity of rock music to incorporate other musical idioms in the creation of new rock styles, a view of the process of assimilation through a consideration of the state of the popular musics of these countries in more broad terms can reveal that full assimilation transcends the boundaries of rock music itself. It is to the discussion of this that I now turn.

### **Assimilation by the incorporation of the vernacular**

To make the case that the encounter of a culture with a prevailing musical idiom over a period of three decades or so should eventually result in the emergence of ‘national’ versions of the musical idiom in question would appear reasonably straightforward as an argument. Such was certainly the case with Britain, France, West and East Germany, Greece, and Italy, in all of which the constant use of rock idioms after the reception of rock’n’roll resulted in the development of idiosyncratic rock scenes, as described earlier in this chapter. Nonetheless, as I have already mentioned, the final and most important

evidence of the assimilation of rock musical idioms in the popular musics of the countries under consideration here is what I have called the ‘intuitive’ use of these in the creation of songs in styles that ended up going beyond the boundaries of what had previously been considered ‘rock music’ as such. I take the position that it is through the use of a musical idiom in these terms that its full assimilation into already existing national popular musics can be revealed: when it is on display as belonging to the national musical vernacular as an element that can be legitimately used or, to put it in other words, when it has entered the collective memory of the people. It is to the ways this can be seen in the countries we are concerned with in this dissertation that I now turn, in order to show that the fact of assimilation of rock idioms also manifests itself in musical territories that often lie outside the normal range of interests of rock music scholars. My aim here is to show that if the assumption that rock idioms had been fully assimilated in these countries by 1985 is correct, then the consideration of any sample of songs taken from these contexts should provide sufficient evidence of it. In order to support my argument I decided to use a random sample of songs that were nationally produced in these countries during the second half of the 1980s, in order to observe the extent to which assimilation had taken place, the co-existence of national popular music idioms and rock musical elements, as well as the degree to which one might see the ‘foreign’ idioms as dominating the ‘national’ musical idioms.

Undoubtedly, the claim that one could pick a random sample of songs from any country by being entirely unbiased can hardly be realistic. The acknowledgment of this created a certain challenge in terms of ways of choosing a sample that would be as neutral as possible. For my purposes, it seemed at the time that the use of ‘chart lists’ was the best option. The plan was to find a sample of five songs from each country that peaked high at the chart lists, and were nationally produced in the second half of the 1980s. Of course, bringing into this context the idea of chart lists or ‘top 40s’ is not going to give us the full extent of the range of musical creativity of the time in the countries we are concerned with, due to the mediated nature of the chart lists, their affiliations with commercial institutions, as well as the institutionalized mainstream culture. Nonetheless, notwithstanding obvious omissions like audience personal preferences, niche audience tastes, live music circuits, and grassroots musical activities, chart lists do, however,



represent what was promoted by the mainstream/official culture of each country, and, as a consequence, what was broadly considered as the ‘popular’ national popular music of the time. As Frith has put it:

The charts work not as the detached measure of some agreed notion of popularity, but as the most important determination of what the popularity of popular music means – that is, a particular pattern of market choice. The charts bring selected records together into the community of the market place; they define certain sorts of consumption as being collective in certain sorts of ways.<sup>96</sup>

Frith here makes a point that is important for my decision to base my comparison in this section on songs from the chart lists, since these seem to represent the musical style that dominated the mainstream popular music scenes of these countries during this period: the one that was produced and distributed for the majority of the national audiences. Nevertheless, the focus on the comparison of chart songs always had important limitations, most significant among these being the inability to access information regarding the chart lists of East Germany and Greece during these years, and therefore these two countries are not included in this comparative ‘close observation’. On the other hand, Britain is not included in this comparison either, since it is to be seen on this occasion in its role as an ‘exporter’ and ‘role model’ for the rest of the countries considered here. I nevertheless maintain, however, that the issues that arise from the comparison between France, West Germany, and Italy are ones that can be extended to both East Germany and Greece as well.

The songs used for this comparison are: ‘L’ Aziza’ by Daniel Balavoine, ‘En Rouge et Noir’ by Jeanne Mas, ‘Capitaine Abandonné’ by Gold, ‘Je te Donne’ by Jean-Jacques Goldman, and ‘Papa Chanteur’ by Jean-Luc Lahaye from France; Modern Talking’s ‘Brother Louie’, and ‘Atlantis is Calling’, Sandra’s ‘Maria Magdalena’, Milli Vanilli’s ‘Girl you Know it’s True’, and Mysterious Art’s ‘Das Omen – Teil 1’ from West Germany; and from Italy ‘Diamond’ by Via Verdi, ‘Ti Sento’ by Matia Bazar, ‘Adesso Tu’ by Eros Ramazzotti, ‘Si Può Dare di Più’ by Morandi, Ruggeri and Tozzi,

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<sup>96</sup> Simon Frith, ‘Towards an aesthetic of popular music’ in *Music and Society: The Politics of Composition, Performance and Reception*, Richard Leppert and Susan McClary (eds.) (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), p.138

and Massimo Ranieri's 'Perdere l'Amore'. For the comparison of the songs I use the approach of what I have called 'close observation': it is not based on in-depth musical analyses of the songs under consideration, but rather on the observation of, and comparison between, their immediately audible characteristics – those found on the 'surface'. I have chosen here to distinguish what I mean by 'close observation' from other approaches to popular music analysis despite the fact that close observation is in some respects itself apparently musico-analytical. However, close observation is an approach that can also be easily accessible to readers who are not musically educated in the conventional sense. This is seen in the fact that the elements of the songs that are being 'observed' here are ones that are immediately audible and where musical-technical analysis can be avoided altogether. More specifically, what I have focused on in this study is: the language of the lyrics; their genre/style; the structure; instrumentation; dominant rhythmic patterns; and the chord progressions, whereas the melodic contour has only been dealt with when it contributed effectively to the findings of the comparison. We shall now turn to the close observation itself, in order to identify the ways in which full assimilation appears to have taken place in the mainstream, institutionalized culture of the countries under consideration here.

The first element discussed here is the language of the lyrics. Although this might seem obvious, I consider that the language used for the song lyrics reveals more than a first reading suggests. This can also be seen in relation to preceding chapters, where the issue of language in popular music was particularly discussed not only as a main indicator of the shift from reception to 'accommodation', but also of the position the song is given by its creators in relation to its place of origin. It has been suggested that the use of English lyrics in songs that are not produced in English-speaking countries can take place either as a rejection of the 'nation' and the 'national culture' (political position), or as an effort to appeal to a wider international audience. Bearing in mind that the songs observed here existed within the mainstream music industries the latter is more likely to be the case when songs appear in the English language. Table 1 shows the language used in the songs considered here:

	FRANCE					W. GERMANY					ITALY				
	L. A.	E. R. e. N.	C. A.	J. t. D	P. C.	B. L.	M. M.	A. i. C.	G. y. k. i. T.	D. O.	D.	T. S.	A. T.	S. P. D. d. P.	P. l. A.
English				X		X	X	X	X	X	X			X (one word)	
French	X	X	X	X	X										
German										X (one phrase)					
Italian												X	X	X	X

Table 1 shows that the three countries differ in terms of the language used in songs. Indeed, in stark contrast with France and Italy, in both of which the indigenous language dominates (exceptions are the French ‘Je te Donne’, half of which is sung in English, and the Italian ‘Diamond’ which is in English), West Germany makes exclusive use of the English language in the songs used here.

The second feature of observation is the genre of the songs, which could provide valuable information concerning the prominent style of popular music in France, West Germany, and Italy during this period. Undoubtedly, it is not possible to classify songs by confining them under one genre label, since most songs exist in cross-reference to different musical styles and genres. As a result, most of the songs that I use here fall into more than one category. Table 2 shows the genre categorization suggested:

	FRANCE					W. GERMANY					ITALY				
	L. A.	E. R. e. N.	C. A.	J. t. D	P. C.	B. L.	M. M.	A. i. C.	G. y. k. i. T.	D. O.	D.	T. S.	A. T.	S. P. D. d. P.	P. l. A.
Pop	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X						
New wave	X	X													
Rock alternatif	X	X		X											
Synth-pop		X	X			X	X	X		X	X	X			
Rock				X										X	

Soft rock					X								X	X	
Ballad					X								X	X	X
Chanson					X										
Disco											X				
Dance									X	X					
Rap									X						

It is evident from the above table that each of the three countries is orientated more towards a specific musical style. France is more obviously rock-influenced, with three of the five songs from the French sample falling into the genre of ‘alternative rock’. This should not be surprising, considering that, as mentioned earlier in this chapter, *rock alternatif* had made a significant impact on the French popular music scene for the biggest part of the 1980s. At the same time, West German popular music seems to be dominated by simple dance songs, particularly in the ‘synth-pop’ style (four out of five songs from the German sample). Indeed, although synthesizers were widely used in the other countries as well (see below in the instrumentation section), they were not used specifically for the creation of songs in the ‘synth-pop’ style. It should nevertheless be remembered here that West Germany had pioneered synthesizer and electronic music, something particularly obvious with the development of *Krautrock* during the previous period which was itself significantly influential for the development of international popular music. On the other hand, the Italian charts seem to be dominated by songs that can be labelled as ballads (three out of five songs), unlike both France and West Germany where the emphasis seems to be more dance-orientated. It should be stressed here that none of these countries appears to have in their chart lists songs of an obviously ‘national’ character. However, France and Italy have one song each that falls outside the category of ‘international style’. These are ‘Papa Chanteur’ and ‘Perdere l’Amore’ respectively which, although not of an obviously ‘international’ character, are both extensively influenced by anglo-american rock musical idioms, something to be seen in more detail later.

One feature of the songs where the assimilation of rock idioms is most readily evident, and also one that is often taken for granted, is the instrumentation. We often forget that the use of electric guitars and electric basses, instruments very rarely omitted in the popular music production for the past few decades, are instruments that appeared at the same time as rock music itself, and are consequently also seen as being very representative of it. The main instrumentation (that is to say, that which is most immediately audible) in the songs that I looked at is presented in the table that follows:

	FRANCE					W. GERMANY					ITALY				
	L. A.	E. R. e. N.	C. A.	J. t. D	P. C.	B. L.	M. M.	A. i. C.	G. y. k. i. T.	D. O.	D.	T. S.	A. T.	S. P. D. d. P.	P. l. A.
Drums	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Electric bass	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Electric guitar	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	
Synthesizer	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X
Acoustic guitar											X				
Piano (el. Piano)				X		X							X	X	X
Accordion					X										
Saxophone													X		X
Winds											X				X
Backing vocals	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	
Violin															X

It is evident from the above comparison that standard rock instrumentation (drums, electric guitar, and electric bass) is used in almost all the songs, regardless of the country of production. Exceptions to this are the French 'Papa Chanteur' and the Italian 'Perdere l'Amore' both of which, as has been mentioned earlier, are more evidently connected to their respective national popular cultures, something that is also to be seen in their

instrumentation: the accordion used in ‘Papa Chanteur’ gives the song a French flavour, while the violins in ‘Perdere l’Amore’ increase the melodramatic effect of the vocal performance and enhance its ‘Italian-ness’. In addition, as can be seen from the table above, the synthesizers, which were the trend of the time in terms of instrumentation, were commonly used in all five of these countries (although not necessarily for the production of synth-pop songs). This means that all these countries were technologically equipped and attuned to current musical developments. All in all, I consider that instrumentation is an important indicator of full assimilation, although rock instrumentation had been constantly evident in the popular music scenes of the five countries discussed in this dissertation, right from the early years of rock’n’roll reception in the late 1950s up to today. Nonetheless, it was mainly during the period discussed here that rock instrumentation had begun to be dissociated from the creation of ‘rock music’ as such. The next table shows the results of the comparison in terms of song structure:

	FRANCE					W. GERMANY					ITALY				
	L. A.	E. R. e. N.	C. A.	J. t. D	P. C.	B. L.	M. M.	A. i. C.	G. y. k. i. T.	D. O.	D.	T. S.	A. T.	S. P. D. d. P.	P. l. A.
A B A B C B	X	X				X	X		X	X	X	X		X	X
A B A B C			X												
A B A B C a b				X											
B A B A B A B					X										
A B A B B								X							
A B A B C A													X		

(Where **A** = (intro +) verse **B** = chorus **C** = bridge)

The fact that the majority of the songs discussed are structured as ABABCB raised the question of the character given to C in each case, since it was through cross-referencing this that I could most easily trace the extent of rock influence. The comparison showed that:

	FRANCE					W. GERMANY					ITALY				
	L. A.	E. R. e. N.	C. A.	J. t. D	P. C.	B. L.	M. M.	A. i. C.	G. y. k. i. T.	D. O.	D.	T. S.	A. T.	S. P. D. d. P.	P. l. A.
Electric guitar solo	X	X	X	X			X							X	
Synthesizer solo						X			X		X	X			
Saxophone solo													X		X
Reference to other musical traditions										X					
No C section					X			X							

As seen in the above chart, the structure ABABCB (most common in rock songs) is the most prominent structure for songs in France, West Germany, and Italy. The C section most often features an instrumental solo. In this context electric guitar solos dominate, regardless of the genre of the song, something particularly evident in France. This is again a very rock-influenced characteristic.

Finally, I considered the harmonic treatment of these songs. However, I chose not to focus on the chord progressions themselves, but instead I looked at the number of chords/harmonic changes used in each song. Bearing in mind that in its initial manifestation rock music tended to make use of a limited number of chords, I considered that looking at the songs in these terms would show not only the connection of the songs to the rock tradition, but also the degree to which they were musically ‘explorative’ by deviating from a basic three-chord progression. My findings were as follows:

	FRANCE					W. GERMANY					ITALY				
	L. A.	E. R. e. N.	C. A.	J. t. D	P. C.	B. L.	M. M.	A. i. C.	G. y. k. i. T.	D. O.	D.	T. S.	A. T.	S. P. D. d. P.	P. l. A.
3									X						
4															
5		X				X									X
6								X							
7															
8	X			X			X								
9			X												
10															
11					X										
12														X	
13												X	X 14		

West German songs appear to exhibit less chord variety than French and Italian songs. It could be assumed that this coincides with the melodic contour of the songs, since German songs also appear to have simpler vocal lines, whereas songs from the other two countries are more ‘explorative’ in these terms. As expected, Italian songs retain their affinity with the ‘melodramatic’ character of Italian musical culture by presenting more explorative musical treatment with regard to harmonic progressions and, consequently, melodic elaboration.

I would like to make some general observations at this point regarding the comparison presented above in order to show some connections with the process of assimilation put forward in this thesis. To start with, it needs to be emphasized once again that the songs that have just been discussed here are products of the same period of time, come from comparable geographical locations, and share the same broad influences: african-american and, later, anglo-american musical idioms. Nonetheless, as we saw from the



above comparisons, they also present notable differences. This shows that, despite their shared influences, French, West German and Italian popular music scenes are characterized by different degrees and processes of assimilation. At the same time, the mediated manner in which songs find their way in the chart lists also indicates what the dominant idea for the national 'popular music' is at any particular period of time. Although one would expect that the kind of popular music style that aims at a national audience would be one that had a 'national' character, it is obvious from the above discussion that this is not always the case. For one thing, this can be seen in the language used for the lyrics, which is often regarded as an important indication of the location of production, but also for the kind of audience at which the song is aimed. In other words, the language of the lyrics is often considered to point to the 'nationality' of the songs (or, put in other words, show their possible lack of 'internationality'). At the same time, the use of the English language for the lyrics exemplifies more often than not obvious efforts to reach an international audience. Indeed, as seen above, where English is used in the lyrics, the sound and treatment of the song is one that largely excludes obvious references to the nation of production, and aims for an international appeal. This is the case with all the West German songs, the Italian 'Diamond', and to a lesser extent the French 'Je te Donne'.

Nonetheless, I suggest that the country of origin of the songs could also be seen in terms of their generic categorization. It has been particularly observed that, although the majority of songs discussed fall into several genre categories, it has at the same time also been stressed that each country shows evident affinities with particular styles. I suggest that this can be seen in terms of the popular music histories of each of the countries under consideration here. For example, I see a West German preference for the production and consumption of songs that are synthesizer-based to be historically aligned with the developments in rock music that took place during the previous period, namely the *Krautrock* phenomenon. In addition, the fact that France remained by and large rock-orientated coincides with the significant place occupied by *rock alternatif* during the 1980s, not only in the French rock scene, but also in French popular music in general. Italian songs, on the other hand, were more likely to have been inclined towards the 'ballad' style, and to have been characterized by elements of lyricism, melodrama, and

the *bel canto* vocal tradition, all of which are elements of Italian musical culture in general.

As we have seen, one song from France, ‘Papa Chanteur’ and one from Italy ‘Perdere l’Amore’ escape the obvious connections with anglo-american influences by resembling in more obvious ways their national musical idioms. On the other hand, West Germany does not seem to have had any songs in the chart lists of the second half of the 1980s that are connected with the West German ‘national’ traditions. As a matter of fact, the only explicit reference to the German ‘tradition’ in the songs discussed above is to be found in ‘Das Omen’, where there is a quotation from Carl Orff’s ‘O Fortuna’ (*Carmina Burana*), which was probably more intended as a reference to the power of fate than to any German musical tradition as such.

Finally, it is worth pointing out that off-beat rhythmic patterns predominate in all these countries, with the exception only of ‘Papa Chanteur’ and ‘Perdere l’Amore’. One only needs to remember how it was the off-beat, syncopated rhythm of the music, so representative of the african-american tradition and so indispensable to the rock idiom from the time of its manifestation onwards (with, however, exceptions in the case of psychedelic and progressive rock styles), that gave rise to the initial expressions of hostility towards it. Indeed, as we saw in earlier chapters, it was the rhythm of rock’n’roll that was watered down in most cases. Thus, the predominance of the syncopated rhythmic patterns as these are exemplified in the popular musics of France, West Germany, and Italy in the late-1980s can be seen to represent not only the victory of rock elements over the processes of institutionalization, but also to constitute important evidence for the assimilation of rock musical elements into the popular music vernaculars of these countries.

### **‘It’s just a brand new kinda me’: Tracing authenticity**

Both the discussion of national *rock scenes*, as well as the comparison of the mainstream songs found in the chart lists, reveals the development of the popular music scenes of the five countries under consideration in this study to be based on the creation of hybrids. I shall now turn to discuss how the acknowledgment of this should not mislead us into believing that these hybrids cannot be seen as *authentic* expressions of national identity

as this is seen here. Indeed, *authenticity* in the way it is considered in this dissertation is not one to be found in the expression of cultural idioms that carry obvious affinities to a historical culture. Put otherwise, it is not national identity as this is seen from the position of the ‘Other’ that I have been discussing in this study, but rather how national identity is experienced by the people of a nation themselves. This is not to be seen in the evocation of any nationalistic feelings that the persistence of the ‘purity’ of cultural identity might suggest, but rather in the way people of each nation can express themselves through the use of cultural idioms of any origin; more specifically, how rock idioms became assimilated as part of the cultural capital of British, French, German, and Italian peoples in ways that enabled them to be used as expressive tools in ways that do not seem ‘unnatural’ for either musicians or audiences. Wicke argues that ‘national cultural identity does not amount to preserving tradition but is, rather, a social question that concerns the cultural expression of *social* experiences – phenomena that inevitably are subject to development and also to some extent internationalization’.<sup>97</sup> In this process of development and internationalization to which Wicke refers, the historical culture is never to be considered as erased. I take the position here that tradition is never entirely left behind, but is instead informed and updated constantly, so that cultural production at any period looks not merely at the past but at the same time translates it into the present. Bhabha puts it as follows:

The borderline work of culture demands an encounter with ‘newness’ that is not part of a continuum of past and present. It creates a sense of the new as an insurgent act of cultural translation. Such art does not merely recall the past as social cause or aesthetic precedent; it renews the past, refiguring it as a contingent ‘in-between’ space, that innovates and interrupts the performance of the present. The “past-present” becomes part of the necessity, not the nostalgia, of living.<sup>98</sup>

In this sense it can be said that the past exists in the present, and the present ‘renews’ the past. In the process of assimilation suggested in this study, tradition has not been erased, and neither were the cultural elements that characterized these countries before the emergence of rock’n’roll. Instead, rock’n’roll idioms came to inform what pre-existed

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<sup>97</sup> Wicke (2), p.324

<sup>98</sup> Bhabha (1994), p.7

and to create new ways of expressing the experiences of the people of a nation through the co-existence of past and present. In this way, the past became indispensable to the present, and the present translated the past into a new language that is national (in all its affinities with the past, and the expression of social phenomena) and international at the same time; a musical language that is hybrid by definition. Nonetheless, the fact that these musical cultures are now hybrids should not suggest that they are 'inauthentic' in comparison to some idea of a 'pure' national culture, since what can be seen as 'pure national culture' can never be defined in concrete terms. Indeed, as has already been discussed in Chapter 2, 'cultural identity', like 'national identity' is always in a process of becoming, and their definition in terms of 'purity', is one that is in most respects 'constructed' and 'imagined'. Appadurai writes that:

Newly emergent hybrid forms, and the middle-class cosmopolitan cultural world to which they belong, do not necessarily constitute a degenerate and kitschy commercial world, to be sharply contrasted with a folk world we have forever lost. In fact, it may be the idea of a folk world in need of conservation that must be rejected, so that there can be a vigorous engagement with the hybrid forms of the world we live in now.<sup>99</sup>

Hence, the national culture should not be pursued in terms of musical languages of folk (or indeed 'the folk'), since these are, dare I suggest, 'museum' languages that do not represent the everyday social life of the people, which is actually dominated by popular music. As has been discussed earlier, the popular musics of Britain, France, West and East Germany, Greece, and Italy have been in constant dialogue with rock idioms since the mid-1950s. As I aim to have shown in the course of this dissertation, rock idioms eventually became assimilated in these five countries by the period we have been looking at in this chapter, and they are now elements of popular music vernaculars that are able to express people's experiences. However, this is not to suggest that the same process could apply to every foreign musical idiom that might appear in a country at any point, and that every musical idiom can go on to become assimilated within a popular music scene. Undoubtedly, however, rock idioms did achieve this. In the preceding chapters I have tried to trace the process through which they did this, and the factors that contributed most significantly to this outcome. In doing so I have pointed to the development and the

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<sup>99</sup> Arjun Appadurai, quoted in Connell and Gibson, p.44

transformations both of rock idioms as well as British, French, German, Greek, and Italian popular musics as these took place in the field of tension between top-down and bottom-up approaches. Regev and Seroussi also put the process of assimilation in the context of struggle, when they write that:

we may speak of national fields of popular music, wherein various music cultures are engaged in contests and struggles over the repertory of musical practices, tastes, and sensibilities and over the canon of musical works that will be institutionalized as the dominant national music. Or, put differently, it is a struggle over which musical habitus and body of musical works will become natural, taken-for-granted components of the legitimate national cultural capital.<sup>100</sup>

### **In conclusion**

I hope that it has been made clear in this dissertation that rock and african-american elements underwent their own contests and struggles until a point was reached when they eventually became part of the cultural capital of these countries. In the process they created rock hybrids, or what might be called ‘indigenous popular music hybrids’ that are idiosyncratic and particular to each of the countries under consideration here which, although they clearly share the same influences, nevertheless present different approaches to these influences and materials. On the one hand, I argue that these hybrids need to be seen as ‘active’, and as in a process of constant development. On the other hand, I suggest, they should not be regarded as competing with the hybrids that have been created in other cultures. Similarly, they should not be seen as developments that are attempting to fight the anglo-american ‘centre’ of popular music, or indeed as a situation where the ‘centre’ simply attempts to incorporate and manipulate the margins. Instead, I argue that these hybrids are centres of activity within their own national cultures, and within which they are created and consumed, and the social experiences of which they express. Tomlinson writes,

It is not really a choice between, on the one hand, the hybridity thesis in the simple form of anarchic, unregulated cultural flows creatively combining, or on the other, the “incorporation” thesis in which cultural hegemony absorb and refigure all subaltern cultures in their own image and to their own ends [...]

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<sup>100</sup> Motti Regev and Edwin Seroussi, *Popular Music and National Culture in Israel* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2004), p.7

hybrid experience is one which escapes incorporation by remaining marginalized in a 'borderlands' which intrinsically, contradictorily, mixes pleasures and woes.<sup>101</sup>

Tomlinson makes an important point which I consider very significant here: when one discusses the particularities of any hybrid, it should not be implied that the specific hybrid needs to find a central place within the broader context of international popular music, to struggle in order to dominate or be dominated. As pointed out at several stages in this dissertation, the focus here on national identity is not to be considered as carrying 'nationalistic' implications. Put otherwise, what I have traced here is not a notion of national identity as seen from the perspective of the 'Other', but rather as this is experienced by the people of a country in their use of and expression through musical idioms that they consider legitimate parts of the musical vernaculars of their cultural capital.

The process of assimilation studied here suggests that, even when the musical idioms that eventually become legitimate parts of any national music vernacular are at the same time shared with other countries, they nevertheless do not go on to create hybrids of popular musics that turn out to be identical everywhere. I maintain, therefore, that each national popular music scene remains distinct, even if at times it sounds similar to other popular music scenes.<sup>102</sup> Nonetheless, the distinctiveness between them is not necessarily directly audible at first hearing, especially when the influences are obviously shared as is the case with rock'n'roll elements in Britain, France, Germany, Greece, and Italy. Thus, as seen in the above section and the close observation of songs from the chart lists, a prior knowledge both of an historical, as well as of a comparative musical knowledge are necessary in order to understand the level and degree of the assimilation of specific musical idioms in different cultures, and be able to identify the differences between songs from different countries, even when these are not always immediately audible. From my perspective, the assumptions regarding the ability of any cultural idiom to be plausible and adjustable to a universal audience by taking the same disguise (in any of its specific hybrid manifestations) would mean to deprive the resulting hybrid of any particularities,

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<sup>101</sup> Tomlinson (1999), p.146

<sup>102</sup> As has been pointed out several points in the dissertation, this does not apply to popular music styles, regardless of their place of production, that aim to reach an international audience.

and, consequently, of any information of the locale in which it originated – it would mean to deprive it of the association with any specific *authentic* identity in these terms. This view can be reinforced by the fact that even rock’n’roll in its original form, for all its popularity during the ‘reception period’ in all the countries discussed here, soon took a different form in each of them in the process of being ‘watered down’. Thus, not even in its initial form could rock’n’roll (and, similarly, any musical style) provide a common musical language, a homogenous, universal, musical idiom. Instead, what it did, I suggest, was to inform, and become informed by, the music that already existed in the countries under consideration, and to move on to create different, idiosyncratic versions in them, right from the earliest stages of its reception. As we saw, it then went on to have a different development in each country, in spite of the fact that the stages which it underwent were similar in each country, and became assimilated in these countries in ways particular to each, creating hybrids that can legitimately express the culture in which they exist. All in all, this is one of the most important features of the hybrid popular music styles I have looked at in this dissertation: the fact that they form musical idioms with which the ‘locals’ can relate as parts of their cultural capital and their national identity, while at the same time being shared with many other cultures all over the world.

By the mid-1980s the assimilation process we have been looking at in this dissertation had reached the stage of completion. French, German, Greek, and Italian popular musics had by now incorporated rock musical elements into their cultural capital not only in the creation of their national rock scenes, but also in the use of rock idioms for the creation of songs that do not fall into the rock category. In fact, it is in the latter case that what I consider ‘full assimilation’ is most clearly manifested: not least because it is in the context of general popular music creation that the intuitive use of any popular music idiom is revealed. In this sense, the use of rock idioms for the creation of different song styles indicates that these now exist freely in the pool of knowledge of songwriters, performers and audiences as parts of their musical vernacular, their national cultural capital. In the course of the preceding chapters I have tried to show that the process of assimilation is not a straightforward one, and is surrounded by different factors, unresolved tensions, constant struggles, expected and unexpected obstacles, diversions,

and economic, political, and ideological manipulations, both top-down and bottom-up. It is through the comparison between the ways these factors have manifested within each of the countries under consideration in this dissertation that I have tried to trace the process of assimilation, a process that has remained equally important in all its phases: the reception stage that led to imitation, the institutionalizing approach of imitation that led to the need for a more creative rock idiom as this was followed by the appearance of and engagement with the British beat movement. The authority and freedom that characterized the version of rock practice exemplified by the beat bands, in combination with a growing political awareness of countercultural movements disillusioned with their increasingly negative political environment that led to musical experimentation and politically-charged lyrics in progressive rock and the work of the new singer-songwriters. In a politically charged musical context that reached its climax with the explosion of the punk phenomenon, the route to assimilation has now become more than apparent, and close to its fulfilment. The process of assimilation manifested itself both in the development of national rock scenes as well as in the incorporation of rock idioms in different song styles from the mid-1980s onwards. Other musical idioms like hip-hop, and rave music had also been gaining increasing visibility in these countries by that stage, their appearance igniting new cycles of moral panic. One of the musical idioms that hip hop and rave were now set up against in efforts to show their unsuitability for expressing the cultures in question had been rock-influenced hybrids. This, on its own should provide undeniable evidence that rock musical elements are part of the musical vernaculars of these countries – legitimate means capable of representing the national identities of the countries in which they have been implanted.



## Chapter 7

### **Conclusions: ‘And the beat goes on’ – how did we get here and where are we heading now?**

In concluding this study of the assimilation of rock idioms I should first briefly situate myself within it before moving on to the more usual concerns of a closing chapter. My passion for rock music began in my early teenage years in Cyprus, when I had randomly tuned into a radio show broadcasting ‘classic rock’. That passion, still alive today, grew from my initial fascination with the most-mainstream-of-the-mainstream of rock music that the aforementioned radio show had broadcast to eventually include everything that rock had to give me (from the mellowest of ballads to the harshest of heavy metal). Stubbornly convinced that ‘authentic’ and ‘good’ rock is only to be found in music that carries either the *Made in USA* or *Made in Britain* labels, I indulged myself with the enjoyment of every Anglophone version of rock that I could get hold of (needless to say, much to my ignorance, a huge percentage of the music I enjoyed was in fact made in Norway, Finland, and other extra-Anglo-American contexts). During these years I had completely dismissed Greek popular music and I was outraged (to say the least) every time I had to argue to my ‘ignorant’ friends that Greek rock ‘does not exist’ – ‘Greek rock,’ I had claimed, ‘is an unsuccessful attempt to ape the sounds of “authentic” rock’ (I am now embarrassed at my insistence in judging music that I had never bothered to listen to closely in the first place). It was only a few years later, as a student, that my immature dismissal of Greek rock was severely shaken when, after a sequence of lucky events, I collaborated with an underground band that could be best described as ‘Greek-speaking alternative pop-rock’. The band’s music and performance style did justice to every single descriptive word used here, all of which they supported with unmistakable ‘authenticity’ and ‘originality’. That experience brought me closer to the music of Greek rock bands, and opened my ears to Greek music of past and present. So there I had it, literally in my hands, the proof that Greek rock does exist, and is indeed unmistakably Greek while unmistakably rock at the same time. The realization of this haunted me for a while, forming many of the questions that underpin this study, because I had now seen

assimilation at first hand, although I was still far from understanding the process through which this assimilation had been achieved.

### **Tracing assimilation**

This study has attempted to trace the process of assimilation of rock musical idioms by focusing not only on Greek popular music, but by employing a comparative study of British, French, German, Greek and Italian popular musics, in order to be able to tease out in more concrete terms the kinds of factors that either assisted or obstructed this process of assimilation. I have suggested that the assimilation process, which took place roughly between 1955 and 1985, can be best seen as unfolding in four stages, each of which took the development of rock culture in all these five countries a further step forward: the period of *reception*; the period of *imitation*; the period of the conscious *development of rock music through the incorporation of national musical elements*; and the point where the *full assimilation* of rock musical idioms can be witnessed. Some concluding observations on each of these periods or ‘stages’ will help towards summarizing the process of assimilation as it is understood in this dissertation in order to tie up loose ends.

The years of the *reception period* began in the mid-1950s, at a point when Britain, France, East and West Germanys, Greece and Italy were going through a period of reconstruction after WWII. In general terms, these countries were trying to rebuild, redefine themselves and regain their national esteem, both in accordance with and against the unavoidable financial and technological dominance of the USA world-wide during the post-war years. At the same time, they were going through processes of adjustment to the new realities of modernity and consumerism that came to dominate the world (and which were by and large promoted by the American plans for financial aid), as well as enormous changes in society, of which an important part had been the rise of the teenager as a new social group. This new reality was far more evident in the countries under the American sphere of influence: Britain, France, West Germany, Italy and Greece, although the latter followed these advancements with a small time-lag due to internal national problems, and more particularly the civil war that took place during the immediate post-war years (1946-49). East Germany, under the Soviet sphere of influence,

might not have been as consumer-orientated, but also saw the rise of the teenager as a new social group, not least because the East German youth culture was experiencing the influence of American popular culture through the ability to access the West German context, first by radio and then also through access to television channels. Indeed, by the time the Berlin Wall was built in 1961, the influence of American popular culture in general, and rock'n'roll in particular on East German youth had made its presence hard to ignore, and even harder to eliminate.

Rock'n'roll entered these contexts as a powerful new musical style that took the indigenous teenagers by storm, not only as a musical style, but as a new cultural universe that concerned first and foremost the youth groups themselves. Nevertheless, as seen in Chapter 3, the teenage fascination with rock'n'roll caused moral panics amongst the adult populations of these countries, the adults who in their turn saw this new musical style as a threat to the respectability of the cultures they were still trying to rebuild. They considered rock'n'roll to be overtly physical, sensual, and 'primitive', mainly because of its african-american origins. They also considered rock'n'roll to be trivial, mainly because of its status as an American popular cultural idiom. As was suggested earlier in the dissertation, these two positions were largely defined by the relationships of these countries with the USA: the fear and the inescapability of its influence that were the result mainly of the financial dependence of these European countries on the USA. From this perspective, in their encounter with rock'n'roll, Britain, France, West Germany, Greece and Italy found themselves faced with the task of accepting it on the one hand, but of finding ways to domesticate it on the other. East Germany, under a completely different regime, opposed rock'n'roll (as well as any other American popular cultural products) fiercely.

Nevertheless, the obvious commercial potential of rock'n'roll made it hard to ignore for the indigenous music industries and the local broadcasting systems of these countries, and we see during the reception years the first attempts at the production of local versions of rock'n'roll: indigenous responses to Elvis (Adam Faith, Tommy Steele, Cliff Richard in Britain, Johnny Hallyday in France, Peter Kraus in West Germany, and Adriano Celentano in Italy); humorous parodies (the Goon Show in Britain, Boris Vian in France, Renato Carosone in Italy); covers of successful American rock'n'roll songs by

indigenous manufactured rock'n'rollers. At the same time, however, we have no sound evidence of the production of Greek rock'n'roll of these early years (there are no recordings available), and, of course, in East Germany rock production was forbidden altogether.

The early attempts of these countries to produce their own versions of rock'n'roll were mainly responses to what was considered to be a musical fad. It was only after they recognized that rock'n'roll was there to stay that more 'calculated' attempts to accommodate and domesticate it started taking place. This is what defines the first stage of what I see as the *imitation period*: 'institutionalization'. Throughout the process of institutionalizing rock'n'roll, the mainstream cultural networks of these countries (music industries, broadcasting networks, the press, and cinemas, among others) tried to produce indigenous versions of rock'n'roll, both in terms of musical style, as well as of image and behaviour that were considered to be acceptable to and aligned with the social and moral standards of these countries at the time. In doing so they created versions of rock'n'roll that were anodyne, drew heavily on their national popular musics (the exception here is the Greek rock style of the time that denounced its Greek-ness in all respects), and promoted images of the good boy and good girl, while at the same time they managed to keep enough of the transgressive character of the early rock'n'roll in order not to downplay the appeal of their new versions of rock'n'roll to the indigenous youth cultures.

In the meantime, Britain, while on the one hand also promoting its 'institutionalized' version of rock culture, saw on the other hand the rise of an underground live rock music circuit that became so successful as to eventually gain nation-wide visibility. We are referring here to the British bands of the early 1960s (The Beatles, The Animals, The Rolling Stones, The Kinks, among others) that created a new rock idiom that was based largely on the same african-american influences that gave rise to rock'n'roll, but also concerned a larger section of the youth culture (students and young workers), and not only teenagers. The 'invasion' of the American popular music scene by these British bands sparked musical dialogues between Britain and the USA that came to define the growth of the international popular music scene for decades to come. At the same time, the 'British Invasion' bands came to conquer the popular music scenes of France, Germany, Greece, and Italy and with their influence they created the basis for

what I see as the second stage of imitation: *imitation through active music-making*. As a matter of fact, these two stages of imitation came to converge and co-exist during the greater part of this period. More specifically, whereas the British bands made it from the underground to the mainstream, bands in the other European countries were going through an ‘institutionalization’ process that resembled the first stages of imitation, and which was now based not on rock’n’roll, but on what was considered to be ‘beat music’. Nonetheless, the important thing to be kept in mind with the second stage of ‘imitation’ is that the rock youth cultures of these countries started from this point onwards to be more actively involved in music-making, and were no longer confined to being mere consumers of rock music, something that was very important for the further development of rock cultures in each of the countries considered here.

The late 1960s, I have suggested, saw the end of *imitation* period and the beginning of the *period of development through national musical elements*. This transition took place within a context of political upheavals and social unrest that was strongly felt in one way or the other in each of the five countries concerned here. As a matter of fact, it is highly likely to be the case that it was because of political upheaval and social unrest that the rock cultures of these countries took the shape they did during these years. As we saw in Chapter 5, the indigenous rock creations of this period that most clearly indicate the development of rock music in these terms developed largely within the underground, and they represented and were represented by the developing countercultures of each of these countries. These are the progressive rock movements, and the use of rock idioms from the new generation of singer-songwriters in these countries. Both of these musical strands took a political character (whether direct or indirect) in each national context and, with the exception of East Germany (which did not develop a progressive rock movement at the time for reasons that have been explored in Chapter 4), were developed with reference to each country’s cultural and political backgrounds.

Musically, these newly-emergent rock scenes drew on the anglo-american influences of the more serious and explorative approaches to rock music-making, namely the possibilities that came about from the merging of rock music with protest songs that Bob Dylan’s electric turn initiated and the psychedelic movements that sprang up in the

San Francisco underground, and which influenced in their turn the shift of the Beatles and other British bands towards what later became known as ‘progressive rock’. The latter, through its strongly experimental character, allowed for developments in rock that were particularly creative, and that could draw heavily on the national contexts of the indigenous bands (either by using their traditional idioms, or by deliberately turning away from them). Moreover, its existence within the underground, and therefore its freedom from the confines of the mainstream culture, gave the practitioners of progressive rock in each country more space to explore the experimental potential of this music further. At the same time the constant use of rock idioms in these countries by singer-songwriters, who were more often than not politically-orientated, legitimized rock as an idiom that could be used in conjunction with more serious popular music genres, and that could express serious issues that reached strands of society other than youth cultures in the strict sense of the term. Again, the work of the rock-influenced singer-songwriters developed in idiosyncratic ways in each of the countries under consideration here, mainly because it was based on issues that were particular to each context. This pull from the underground that I have suggested developed in response to the institutionalized versions of popular music of the previous period on the one hand, and the heated political context of the late 1960s and the 1970s on the other, and was supported and promoted by the counterculture, affected in major ways the rock awareness in each of these countries. Indeed, in some cases (Italian progressive rock being the most obvious), it made its way towards national visibility. Nonetheless, it has to be remembered that these two strands of rock music described here do not by any means represent the entire rock output of these countries. They co-existed with other rock styles, and it was through these that the development of rock music was brought about in the most obvious terms.

Among the numerous styles that emerged during this period, the rock-prolific years of the 1970s also saw the emergence of a new ‘rock’ style that, as discussed in Chapter 6, through its influence on the French, German, Greek and Italian popular music scenes, marked the final step, so I have argued, on the road towards assimilation. I have, of course, referred in specific terms here to punk. In contrast to the ways in which the rock idiom was developed through progressive rock and in the work of singer-songwriters, the indigenous youth cultures dealt with punk in highly mimetic ways,

particularly in relation to the music itself. However, I have suggested that they also adapted punk to their own specific realities, by surrounding it with particular connotations and associations and by attaching to it particular meanings that were more often than not different than the ones represented by punk music in its original manifestation. The adaptation of punk to the specific realities of these countries as a new form of rebellious DIY music that came to complement the more serious developments that were carried on from progressive rock and the work of singer-songwriters managed to bring, one way or another, the rock idiom into the mainstream and give it further visibility. In addition, the fact that rock idioms had also been available in these countries for approximately two decades by this time meant that they had by now entered the pool of knowledge of indigenous audiences, and as I have argued, thus found their way into becoming part of the musical cultural capital of these countries.

I have made the claim that the full assimilation of rock musical idioms in these five countries has manifested itself in two ways: first, with the development of *national rock scenes* (new wave in Britain, *rock alternatif* in France, *Neue Deutsche Welle* in the two Germanys, ‘commercialized rock’ in Italy, and political rock in Greece). All of these carry an unmistakable rock sound, and, whether they draw on their national culture or not, they do nevertheless show that they were created, as I have described it, ‘intuitively’. Even more revealing in these terms, I have suggested, is the second way the assimilation of rock idioms is exemplified, which is to be seen in the extensive use of rock idioms in the popular musics of these countries – and, most importantly, the use of these idioms in songs that do not necessarily belong to the ‘rock style’ as such. The fact that rock idioms appear to have entered the musical vocabularies of indigenous songwriters, performers and audiences alike, and are now being used freely in the creation of songs regardless of their specific musical style, reveals that the use of rock idioms is now *intuitive* by definition. In these terms, it means, I have proposed, that we can speak of an undeniable assimilation of rock musical idioms in the cultural capital of these countries, and their existence in the pool of knowledge of listeners alongside other elements that are aligned with the expression of national identities. One can therefore speak of rock musical idioms, I have argued, as ‘authentic means of expression’ in these countries.

### **Assimilation and hybridity**

In the preceding chapters I have tried to focus on the importance of the internal situations in Britain, France, Germany (West and East), Greece, and Italy that frame the process of assimilation of rock musical idioms. In doing so, I have sought to show that, in spite of the many similarities of this process and its resulting musical styles in each country, the *assimilation* of any musical idiom is always to be seen as particular and idiosyncratic to each country. In these terms, assimilation is to be seen in the creation of hybrid musical idioms which, while resembling those to be seen in other contexts, are at the same time particularly representative of the country in which they were created. Indeed, as much as they might sound similar, and notwithstanding the fears arising from the effects of Americanization, the tensions created by globalization, and questionable ways of thinking that saw all of this as to do with cultural corruption, inauthenticity and musical homogeneity of the kind that historically accompanies the existence of these ‘international’ rock musical idioms around the world, the resulting post-assimilation hybrids of each country (as I hope the discussion of British, French, German, Greek and Italian popular music has shown) remain at the same time particularly specific to the national contexts that produced them. It has been suggested in this dissertation that what makes each hybrid so distinctly unique is the *national popular music* context in which it has been created: and, more specifically, the way it is situated in the space created from the tensions between top-down and bottom-up processes that affect popular music, and which follow the life of each musical idiom in any country from the moment of its appearance up to the point of its assimilation. These are evident in each of the five countries considered here during each of the four phases of assimilation. For example, in the reception years, the tensions between top-down oppositions to rock’n’roll and the bottom-up fascination of the youth culture with this musical idiom created the need to find ways for its accommodation within each country. The imitation years saw clearly the top-down efforts to domesticate and capitalize on rock’n’roll, and the response of the youth culture which started creating its own versions of rock idioms (albeit in less confident ways initially) through active music-making. The period of development through national popular music saw rock music emerging from the bottom-up as a catalytic force of political cultural production that developed in the face of the politically



charged climate of the time and the opposition of the counterculture to the top-down system that defined the mainstream society on the one hand, while on the other hand it was nothing but an opposition to the top-down super-star rock idioms that were promoted in the mainstream musical culture from the second half of the 1960s onwards. The full assimilation discussed in Chapter 6 can be seen as representing the resolution of the tensions created between top-down and bottom-up processes concerning rock music. This is exemplified in the capacity that rock idioms appear to have acquired by the mid-1980s to exist legitimately in the sphere of the everyday lives of the people of these countries as unchallenged parts of their national musical cultural capital. I have argued here that this is also where the assimilation of rock idioms in the 'national' popular musics of these countries is to be found: namely, located within socio-political contexts where the everyday activities of the people, their social situations, economic conditions, and national policies exist in relation to an ever-present, shared, imagined historical and cultural past.

This final point emphasizes an important factor that underpins this process of assimilation and determines in many respects (although not always visibly) the ways in which popular music develops in each context: that is to say, the nation-state. With its regulations, censorship, quotas, taxation, control of broadcasting networks and copyright laws, along with government policies in relation to all of these, the nation-state affects in important ways how music is produced, consumed, and understood within its borders. Lest we forget, the most important factor in the politicization of rock in East Germany was, in the first place, the result of the opposing stance of the East German state towards rock music. Moreover, even in West Germany, for all the decentralized character of cultural production, the press, and the broadcasting system, rock music developed in a specific West German way due to the peculiarities of the national context that surrounded it – nation state and national networks, as well as regional press with a national circulation again controlled mainly by the nation-state. The recognition of the role of the nation-state in these terms does justice to the understanding of national popular music as that which exists within the field of tension between top-down and bottom-up processes: music which is situated in the everyday lives of the people, experienced within their socio-political context which is by and large defined by the position of the nation-state

not only with regard to other nations, but also with regard to ideas about what the nation in question represents. The recognition of this is partly what led the focus of this dissertation to the study of rock music in relation to *national* identity, as opposed to local identity or cultural identity. But the question remains: would the same apply for other national contexts that do not resemble the British, French, German, Greek and Italian contexts during the years between 1955 and 1985? How would different national and socio-political situations affect the assimilation process as this is understood here?

### **Where are we heading now?**

The above question opens up new spaces for exploration and future research. First, one might consider how the process of assimilation described here could be applied to contexts other than the European: for example, African and/or Asian countries. The study of assimilation in these terms could reveal how internal processes and socio-political systems unlike those of European countries during the Cold War affected the course of rock music in very different countries in other parts of the world. The comparison of the findings of the studies of European, African, and Asian countries in these terms could reveal how the situation differs in contexts of distance, in contrast to contexts of proximity. Second, I suggest that the study of the process of assimilation suggested here could also be applied to different musical idioms that appear to have been ‘internationalized’ after rock’n’roll (for example, hip hop). In doing so, one could see how this process is affected by different socio-historical conditions together with the more advanced technological possibilities that have emerged since the 1980s, and shed light on the ways in which the rapid increase in the speed of dissemination and the previous experience with the assimilation of rock music has served either to assist or to restrict the full assimilation of other musical idioms.

All in all, I hope that the process of assimilation as discussed in the course of this dissertation has succeeded in showing that it is in the internal processes that take place within a nation that the full assimilation of a musical idiom into the cultural capital of a country is to be seen. I have proposed that this takes place within the space created between top-down and bottom-up dynamics, and is therefore particular to each country, regardless of the possibility that the ‘sound’ of the music of a particular country might at

the same time also resemble the music of other countries. Furthermore, I have taken the view that no understanding of these processes can occur without a previous 'horizontal' knowledge of the history of popular music in these countries ranging from the pre-rock'n'roll years up to the point of full assimilation, while this at the same time needs to be seen in relation to a 'vertical' awareness of the simultaneous development of the popular music of other comparable countries at the same period. It is this combination of the diachronic and the synchronic that has characterized my comparative approach throughout this study.

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